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ABSTRACT

This document contains testimony, prepared statements, letters, and supplemental materials submitted during two days of hearings held in September, 1977. Under consideration was a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require state educational agencies to establish basic standards of educational proficiency applicable to secondary school students. Admiral H. G. Rickover expressed strong beliefs that the educational system is falling behind the needs of society. The president of Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, Dr. Phillip Shriver, testified that many entering freshmen are not prepared for college level work. The second day of testimony, Representative Ronald Mottl announced that he planned to introduce a substitute bill that would allow local systems to initiate minimum competency testing on a voluntary basis. Further testimony was presented favoring the federal government helping states establish standards but maintaining local control. Dr. Mary Berry, Assistant Secretary for Education of HEW, discussed issues of problem definition and development of national educational standards. Mr. John R. Andrisek, superintendent of Berea City Schools in Ohio, described their minimum competencies program. Mrs. Carolyn Warner, superintendent of public instruction in Arizona, described Arizona's continuous uniform evaluation system. Mr. Barry Beal, supervisor, department of development and evaluation, Denver Public Schools, described the Denver experience with minimum competency examinations. (MLF)

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PART 11: A BILL TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL PROFICIENCY STANDARDS

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H.R. 6088

TO AMEND THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965 TO REQUIRE STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES TO ESTABLISH BASIC STANDARDS OF EDUCATIONAL PROFICIENCY APPLICABLE TO SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

HEARINGS HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 12 AND 15, 1977

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and Labor
CARL D. PERKINS, *Chairman*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
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PART 11: A BILL TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL PROFICIENCY STANDARDS

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1977

House of Representatives,
Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary
and Vocational Education,
Committee on Education and Labor,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m. in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ronald M. Mottl presiding.

Members present: Representatives Mottl, Kildee, and Goodling.

Staff present: John F. Jennings, majority counsel; Christopher Cross, minority senior education consultant; and Nancy L. Kober, staff assistant.

[Text of H.R. 6088 follows:]

95TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6088

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 5, 1977

Mr. MOTTL introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

---

A BILL

To amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require State educational agencies to establish basic standards of educational proficiency applicable to secondary school students.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That title VIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 881 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new section:

"BASIC EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

"SEC. 813. (a) (1) No application made by a State educational agency for assistance under this Act may be considered unless the State educational agency making such application provides assurances that such State educational agency will establish and implement basic standards of educational proficiency in accordance with the plan of such State educational agency approved under subsection (b) (4) or in accordance with applicable Federal standards. Such standards shall include the administration of a reading, writing, and mathematics proficiency examination, in accordance with the provisions of this section, to each student enrolled in secondary schools in the State involved.

"(2) Such examination shall be administered to a student during the academic year preceding the academic year during which such student completes the requirements necessary for graduation from secondary school. If such student fails to achieve a passing grade in such examination, such student shall be given an opportunity to take such examination during the following academic year.

"(3) A passing grade in such examination shall be a requirement necessary for graduation from secondary school. A local educational agency may not certify the graduation of any student who has not achieved a passing grade in such examination.

"(4) Such examination shall be designed to test proficiency in writing skills, reading and comprehension, and mathematics skills and comprehension. Such examination shall emphasize testing the ability of a student to use and understand language and to read with facility and understanding.

"(b) (1) There is hereby established a commission to be known as the National Commission on Basic Education (hereinafter in this section referred to as the 'Commission').

"(2) The Commission shall be composed of fifteen members as follows:

"(A) three appointed by the President from among individuals serving on State boards of education;

"(B) three appointed by the President from among individuals serving on local boards of education;

"(C) three appointed by the President from among persons employed as teachers in secondary school systems; and

"(D) six appointed by the President from members of the general public.

"(3) Members of the Commission shall serve without pay. While away from their homes or regular places of business, members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in the Government service are allowed expenses under section 5703(b) of title 5, United States Code.

"(4) The Commission shall—

"(A) establish basic standards of educational proficiency designed to evaluate the reading, writing, and mathematics skills of secondary school students;

"(B) review plans submitted by State educational agencies for the establishment of standards in conformity with the basic standards established by the Commission under subparagraph (A); and

"(C) determine whether to approve plans submitted by State educational agencies under this paragraph.

"(5) Each State agency which desires to receive assistance under this Act shall submit the plan referred to in paragraph (4) (B) no later than two years after the effective date of this section. The Commission shall complete its review of all such plans no later than three years after such effective date.

"(6) The Commission shall transmit a report to the President and to the Congress, no later than three years after the effective date of this section, which contains a detailed statement of the activities of the Commission under this section. The Commission shall cease to exist thirty days after the transmission of such report. The Commissioner of Education shall be responsible for the administration of the provisions of this section after the termination of the existence of the Commission.

"(c) In any case in which the Commission disapproves a plan submitted by a State educational agency under subsection (b) (4) (B), the basic standards established by the Commission under subsection (b) (4) (A) shall be placed in effect in the State involved if such State desires to receive assistance under this Act.

"(d) The Commission may award grants to State educational agencies, in such amounts as the Commission considers necessary, during the two-year period following the effective date of this section to assist such State educational agencies in preparing basic standards to be submitted to the Commission under subsection (b) (4) (B).".

Mr. Mottl. The Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education today begins two days of hearings on H.R. 6088, legislation that would require all the States to administer minimum competency tests in reading, writing, and mathematics to their high school students.

Competency testing, in conjunction with the "back to basics" movement, has become one of the important issues in American education today. With recent surveys showing that 13 percent of our Nation's 17-year-olds are functionally illiterate, with the rate climbing to an alarming 42 percent among our inner city youth and with the steady decline in national test scores such as the student aptitude test, the quality of the education our children are receiving is increasingly being questioned. In fact, about 25 percent of incoming freshmen at major universities must take remedial courses in the basics.

As a method of reversing this downward trend, a growing number of State and local school districts are turning to minimum competency or proficiency testing. In 1976 alone, 17 States adopted some system of competency testing for their pupils. Local school districts such as the Washington, D.C., school system are adopting competency testing as a means of insuring that their students are indeed learning something during the school year.

I am pleased that the Berea school system, situated in Greater Cleveland in my district, took the lead in adopting its own minimum competency testing standards recently. This panel will have the opportunity to hear testimony from Berea schools Superintendent Dr. John Andrisek later this week.

While it is encouraging that some State and local school districts are thus directly tackling the problem of illiteracy head on, the vast majority of our children receive no standard periodic review to determine if they are mastering the basic educational skills needed in our society.

That is why I introduced the legislation before us today. I do not believe it is the perfect solution to the problem of the high rate of illiteracy among our young people, but it can serve as a vehicle to find that solution.

I know that additional Federal involvement in education is resented by State and local school officials. But in the past decade Congress has sent billions upon billions of dollars to State and local school systems in a myriad of programs. I believe Congress has the right to expect better results than are currently being obtained. If the States refuse to implement their own systems of competency testing, then it is up to the Federal Government to act.

My position in this matter is comparable to the situation existing with no-fault insurance. To date, only 19 States have passed no-fault insurance legislation, and there are some Members of Congress who believe there should be a Federal law to prod States into action by setting up minimum standards for every State.

Before proceeding, I would first like to express my sincere appreciation to Chairman Perkins for scheduling hearings on this legislation. Chairman Perkins has been delayed at the Welfare Reform Subcommittee, but he is expected shortly.

It is an honor for us to have with us today as our first witness Adm. H. G. Rickover, who is probably best known for his accomplishments in developing our nuclear-powered Navy. In addition to his substantial contributions to national defense, Admiral Rickover has made substantial contributions in other fields, of which education is one. He has evidenced a long-lived interest in education. He has written three books on that subject. He runs schools in connection with the training of military personnel for duty in the nuclear-powered Navy.

This committee frequently hears testimony from the so-called educational experts. Admiral Rickover is, in a sense, a customer who must use the products of our schools in a very difficult job of designing, building, and operating nuclear propulsion plants for Navy ships. It is in this capacity that we have invited him to testify.

Admiral Rickover, it is an honor to have you here with us today. Please proceed in any manner you wish and, in reviewing the transcript, feel free to revise and to extend your remarks so the committee will have the full benefit of your views in the field of education. Please proceed.

STATEMENT OF ADM. HYMAN G. RICKOVER, DEPUTY COMMANDER FOR NUCLEAR POWER, NAVAL SEA SYSTEMS COMMAND

Admiral Rickover. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me to testify on the quality of education and what needs to be done to improve it.

Over the last three decades, I have interviewed over 12,000 top graduates from some 150 different colleges and universities in search of young people with intelligence, integrity, and initiative who can meet the demands of the naval nuclear propulsion program. In these people, I look not so much for technical competence—we will teach them that—but for the ability to think for themselves, to understand the basic principles of the courses they have taken, and to speak clearly.

I am often disappointed at what I find. Although a student's record may show that he has taken a variety of courses with impressive titles, his basic knowledge of fundamentals has declined markedly in relation to his counterpart of 15 years ago.

It is not uncommon for me to interview a recent graduate from a good college who has received a master's degree in mathematics but is incapable of solving a 10th grade algebra problem. I have interviewed students receiving a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering who do not know the difference between alternating current and direct current.

In case after case, not only in engineering, mathematics, and science but in history, foreign language, economics, and other fields, many students with excellent academic records are unable to discuss even the fundamentals of their disciplines. Yet most of them honestly believe they learned what was expected of them because they received good grades.

Because I am also responsible for training enlisted personnel for the nuclear program, I observe the products of our elementary and secondary schools. It is a disheartening experience. Within the past five years, I have been compelled to incorporate a remedial prenuclear power school because of the increasing attrition due to academic failures. I must now teach courses in the basics of mathematics, physics, and chemistry to high school graduates to prepare them to enter the nuclear power school.

Here again, remember that we only accept into the nuclear program high school graduates of the highest mental caliber. You can appreciate the problem faced by the rest of the Navy in attempting to train personnel of lesser ability to handle the complex equipment now in use.

The Chief of Naval Personnel recently disclosed that the Navy is having a difficult time finding recruits who read well enough to do their job. He cited an example of a sailor who, because he could not read instructions, caused $250,000 in damage to a diesel engine by attempting to make repairs based solely on illustrations in the manual. Because of the increasing number of high school graduates who cannot read adequately, the Navy now requires many of its recruits to enroll in a 6-week remedial course aimed at raising their reading ability to the sixth-grade level.

There are many other signs that our educational system is falling behind the needs of our society.

In the mid-1960's, scores of college entrance examinations began a decline. The drop is revealed in the scores for the scholastic aptitude tests (SAT)—the entrance examinations required by most colleges. The American college tests, the Minnesota scholastic achievement test, and the Iowa tests of educational development show a similar trend.

The recently released Wirtz report delves into the possible reasons for this decline and concludes there is an urgent need to improve the quality of education offered in our schools. The report calls for a restoration of "the traditions of critical reading and careful writing."

Last year, the Private Higher Education Annual Report found "an appalling decline in the preparation of newly admitted students in reading, writing, and mathematics."

The National Assessment of Educational Progress, a federally financed organization, recently studied writing samples of 7,500 youths. Only a tenth of the 9-year-olds, a third of the 13-year-olds, and half of the 17-year-olds could organize ideas on paper. Most wrote random sentences.

In 1975, the University of California reported that 75 percent of the State's best high school graduates failed a nationally used English composition test. They could not express themselves, choose the right word to complete a thought, or organize their writing.

These problems tend to be masked, however, by the pernicious practice of grade inflation. At many colleges three-quarters of the grades given are A's or B's. Grade inflation at high school appears to be just as prevalent.

The high school diploma and the college degree have been cheapened to the point where ofttimes they no longer stand for recognition of academic achievement. One example is the high school valedictorian who failed to meet the entrance requirements of a local university because his college board examination scores were but half of what the university expected.

Another is the high school graduate who sued a school system for "educational malpractice," complaining that he was not taught enough reading and writing to get and hold a decent job and that he was promoted from grade to grade despite a consistent record of failing marks.

Grade inflation is an effect rather than a cause, the inevitable result of restructuring courses and methods of teaching to demand less work on the part of the students. Where demands are low, more students get high grades. The student has been led to believe that he has mastered the course because he has done what the system calls for. He is happy, the teacher is happy, the school is happy, the parents are happy. Only society is unhappy.

Far from helping students, grade inflation robs them of a proper education. Too late they discover how little they really learned. Accepting a diploma without an education makes no more sense than getting vaccinated and not finding out the vaccination took. A person who believes he is safely vaccinated but is not is a danger to himself and to others.

If our educational system is to be improved, parents and students must view education as the pursuit of knowledge and the development of essential skills such as reading, writing, and the ability to reason not simply the pursuit of grades and diplomas.

Parents are partly responsible for inadequacies in our children's academic skill. They do not spend enough time with the child nor show sufficient interest in his schoolwork. Further, many parents have come to substitute the judgment of professional educators for their own in gauging whether their children are receiving a proper education. Other parents figure they can buy better education if only enough money is spent.

Consequently our educational system is replete with monuments to this philosophy of "money cures all": elaborate school buildings, instructional media for which we pay three times as much as for textbooks, and calculators for children who do not even know arithmetic. But the education of our youth is something that requires personal dedication and a substantial investment of time, not just money.

Television has contributed greatly to the decline in the reading and writing skills of the child. Studies have shown that high school seniors have spent more of their lives in front of television than inside the classroom. Parents are derelict in allowing their children to become slaves of television. They watch television along with their children and thereby given parental approbation to the values that television transmits. Worse, some parents use television as an electronic babysitter.

The television set is inferior to the book as a means of education. Watching is passive; reading is active. Television is nonstop, giving the viewer no time to think; he is rushed from one scene to the next. A book allows a person to stop, reflect, to turn back to a remembered passage—months or even years after the first reading. A book can encourage imagination and independent thought. Television, however, frequently leaves children with a false image of the real world. Television is conditioning them to think that any problem can be resolved in a half hour; or if difficult, perhaps an hour. It tends to shorten the attention spans of children, making the hard work of learning appear even more tedious when compared with the entertainment-oriented television. It fails to develop critical and analytical thought—qualities which we have prized throughout our history. Its primary purpose appears to be to make consumers of grownups and children.

Changes in society have no doubt played their part in the deterioration of the quality of education. But I believe the primary blame for the decline rests squarely on the educational establishment. Many educators would have us believe that the schools themselves have played no part in the decline of student ability. Self-deception is particularly rife in educational research.

In 1966 the Coleman report, typical of many similar studies by the U.S. Office of Education, came to the startling conclusion that the socio-economic status of a child's classmates was a more important influence on his achievement than his teacher. This conclusion was astonishing because the offspring of countless uneducated immigrants today occupy leading positions in business, the professions, public life, and the arts. Yet, influential educators, intellectuals, journalists, legislators, administrators, and judges quickly and uncritically accepted this hypothesis.

Coleman's finding became the rationale for many efforts to require more racially balanced schools, and resulted in vast expenditures of public funds; political and racial arguments; and dislocations in school systems. Later investigation showed the data to have been misinterpreted and incorrectly evaluated. After years of support for and identification with the policy of mandatory racial balance as an educational goal, Coleman, in 1975, subsequent to criticism of his thesis, changed his position. He not only dissociated himself from the legal and political decisions engendered by his report, but admitted that schools did, perhaps, make a difference in the achievement of children.

Left to their own designs, educators, in the name of innovation, have made it possible for many students to avoid courses that would provide a solid grounding in the basic academic subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics. Studies have documented declines in enrollment in basic academic courses. In some cases, courses in basic skills have been supplanted by electives or extracurricular activity. In others the total number of instructional hours per school year has declined.

In an effort to instill more relevance in education, many schools have invested substantial resources in programs which seem directed more toward providing amusement than toward developing children's ability to sort facts and make intelligent decisions. Couched in the unintelligible jargon of systems analysis and other pseudosciences, these programs place a high priority on freedom of choice in course selection without first insuring that the choices are structured to meet academic needs.

To digress for a moment, Mr. Chairman, more and more educators are writing and speaking in a language I call "educationese." It sounds very profound. But from what I have seen, it is a "cover" for the fact that these people don't really know what they are talking about.

In engineering, we have to be very exact in what we say, otherwise, designers and workmen might make erroneous assumptions that could jeopardize the lives of men and valuable machinery. However, "educationese" allows educators to use big words to make people believe that they are smarter than they really are. If they are asked to define the words they use, they often can't do it and instead they try to make you feel embarrassed for not understanding the "obvious" or guilty of interfering with the work of "experts."

I am sure, Mr. Chairman, that you have seen examples of "educationese." Most of our educators are afflicted with this curse.

Much experimentation has focused on ways to give the student greater opportunity for "creativity." The ends to which this policy is taken are absured. One school superintendent forbade the use of coloring books on the grounds that they force pupils to confine their artistic efforts within fixed lines. Another superintendent of a big city school system felt that since children were allowed to be creative at home, they should be allowed to be creative at school. The resultant milling around of children in the schools led to chaos. This was a predictable result, since most children are not competent to decide what is in their own best interest or how much creative freedom they should enjoy.

This drift in educational thinking strikes at the very basis and fabric of society. Schools are fostering attitudes in students that ill-prepare them for the harsh realities of the world. Take the idea that learning must be easy and preferably entertaining. This idea is cruel to the child and dangerous to society, for children grow up believing that they need not struggle to excel.

In the attempt to make learning fun, and I believe to make themselves popular, many teachers and administrators have deemphasized disciplined thought and work habits, and stressed creativity, individuality, and feeling, to the detriment of academic achievement. What this means in teaching English, for example, is a turning away from serious reading and closely reasoned writing. Students, especially at the high school level, are led to believe that oral and written expression need no real effort. Feelings are often placed ahead of language as the primary tool of expression. In consequence, students are cheated; they do not face the difficulties inherent in good writing, and do not develop the ability to write well. This approach may free instructors tedious grading of papers and themes; however, it does not develop the necessary skills.

One of the truths of life is that if you want to influence others, it is not enough to know a subject; you must also be able to express what you know. That is what makes the ability to write clearly a most valuable skill. But many students simply do not value writing skills in a world they see as predominantly technical. Teachers who hold grammatical achievements in small esteem reinforce this notion.

The "learning is easy" movement has also affected mathematics. In the late 1950's, new math was hailed as a revolutionary new method of teaching a subject that generations of children had found distasteful, or not fun. By abolishing the systematic progression from arithmetic through algebra and geometry, new math was supposed to make it easy for children to understand and enjoy mathematics. The results were predictable. The money spent on training teachers in the new math and rewriting textbooks was largely wasted. Millions of young Americans have learned something of sets, variables, and binary operations. But many have failed to learn the arithmetic needed to balance checkbooks or figure income taxes and most have a poor foundation from which to move to higher mathematics, physics, and engineering.

There is a passage in the Talmud that reads: "The world is upheld by children who study." Learning can be interesting, rewarding, and exciting, but it requires effort. It is work. No learning takes place, just as no ditch gets dug, without work. Mental sweat is required of the student who would acquire the skills, concepts, and information necessary to master a course. Preaching the doctrine that learning should be easy implies that society has an obligation to make life easy, and promotes an already far too prevalent attitude against work. If our goal is to entertain our children, we can do so far more cheaply than by sending them to schools.

Despite growing disenchantment by many parents, teachers, and students with undisciplined learning and experimentation, these programs continue to receive strong support from educational leaders. The new head of the U.S. Office of Education recently spoke of alternative educational approaches for high school students, contending that children today are more sophisticated. He attributes their earlier maturation to television and other factors. From my experience, many of today's students are academically immature and unsophisticated.

Alternative educational approaches should not detract from a school's primary mission of educating students in the basic skills. The following teacher's note on a report card, as it appeared in the Georgia Education Digest, best expresses this point: "Alvin excels in initiative, group integration, responsiveness, and activity participation. Now if he'd only learn to read and write."

Teachers share in the blame for the condition of our schools today. If students had no teaching machines or visual aids, no buildings, counselors or administrators, they would still learn if they had competent teachers. As a group, today's graduates destined for teaching positions do not possess a solid academic background. Some educationists hold the fallacious belief that expertise in classroom management can supplant knowledge. While classroom management, discipline, and presentation are important, they are no substitute for competence in the subject being taught. In Europe, teachers are required to know the subject matter. Those teaching above the elementary level have advanced degrees in their field. But in this country, teachers often are not required to have a mastery of a subject they teach. What many States consider as important qualifications are the number of education courses in teaching techniques—not competence or skill in subject matter.

Mr. Chairman, I can recall that, during my graduate work in electrical engineering at Columbia University, I used to see teachers attending summer sessions in graduate education work. Generally. after 7 years of this horrible summer school work, they would get a master's degree. However, I suspect that some of them knew as much about education at the end of those 7 years as a loony bird does.

Returning to my prepared statement, restrictive State laws promote the view that teaching techniques are more important than subject matter. In today's climate, a smart prospective teacher will avoid an advanced degree because the higher salary it commands makes it more difficulty to get a job.

One publisher of science materials for junior and senior high schools touted his product as follows:

"And it does not require specific subject background on the part of the earth science teacher."

In other words, the teacher does not need to know much earth science in order to use these teaching materials. But this problem is more widespread: Foreign languages are taught in many high schools by those not fluent in them; geometry and algebra by those who know little mathematics. Most English teachers are literature majors who resent teaching writing skills or who are unqualified to teach them.

Studies have shown that, on the average, prospective teachers exhibit the lowest academic ability of any major group in higher education. One study revealed the startling fact that, in terms of high school academic performance, teachers ranked above only one other group—that composed of students who had dropped out of college with failing marks. This conclusion is supported by the Educational Testing Service, which found that those taking the graduate record examination in the field of education consistently made lower scores than those in any other field.

Low ability, combined with second-rate training, means that many students finishing teacher education programs are not competent to teach. For instance, one Florida county, in 1976, found that one-third of the applicants for teaching jobs failed an eighth grade level general knowledge test. Confronted with such evidence, the State's Board of Regents decided to require professional competency tests before a prospective teacher can graduate from a State University.

When unqualified people are admitted to the teaching ranks, their incompetency either goes unnoticed because of inadequate teacher performance measures, or, once discovered, the incompetent teacher is protected from removal by tenure. Today the laws are so restrictive in most States that superintendents and school boards seldom even try to dismiss incompetents. Over a 2-year period ending in March 1975 there were only 14 tenured teachers dismissed in the entire State of California. In a 23-year period, Cleveland, Ohio's largest school system managed to dismiss only one tenured teacher.

Since you come from Ohio, Mr. Mottl, I would guess that this situation causes you some concern. I challenge you, though, to try to do anything about the tenure system. But you will probably be dead long before there are any fundamental reforms in the tenure system.

A rare exception to this policy of "protecting" incompetent teachers occurred in April of this year when the school board in Goochland County, Va. fired an elementary schoolteacher on grounds of incompetence because of her atrocious grammar. The teacher, a veteran of 12 years in the Goochland school system, was dismissed after a parent complained about the grammar in a third- and fourth-grade social studies guide the teacher had prepared for her students.

Among the questions the teacher had prepared were these, reproduced verbatim:

What did the sculpture told the archeologists?
Why did the Maya sailed to other ports?

How many names did each Maya had?

The grammar was atrocious, [the school superintendent said:] I would just assume a college graduate wouldn't have this sort of weakness.

With that comment, the superintendent hit upon the fundamental weakness in our approach to education in this country. We have all assumed that the $120 billion we spent in 1975 and all sums before it is resulting in well-educated children.

To attract intelligent teachers, schools need to make teaching professional. Although many teachers are incompetent and probably paid more than they deserve, their pay in general is not sufficiently high to attract top-flight people to the profession. Labor agreements between school districts and teachers effectively rule out remuneration based on merit. Extra stipends are payable for coaching or extracurricular activities but not for classroom performance. Ideally there should be a merit pay system or other means of recognizing excellence in teaching. The reward of watching young minds develop is not always enough to sustain lifetime dedication to teaching.

Pay, however, does not guarantee performance. In the Federal Government and in private industry, there are many examples of people who, although well paid, do not perform to their capacity. However, parents can encourage schools to provide conditions more conducive to professional teaching. For example, at the high school level, because the teacher himself must handle a large amount of the clerical and administrative workload, there are great pressures on teachers to simplify tests and grading, minimize assignments, and avoid written work. It is not surprising in these circumstances that true and false examinations or multiple choice tests tend to replace the written assignments so essential to the development of writing and reasoning skills. How many teachers are willing to devise comprehensive tests and assignments when they must draft, type, and reproduce them essentially on their own time? The availability of administrative and clerical support for teachers would probably enhance the quality of education and teacher morale more than the investment of equivalent funds in teacher salaries.

On-the-job evaluation and training of teachers by experienced and competent supervisors is needed to rid our system of bad teaching. Schoolteachers are among the most unsupervised workers in society. Many administrators never truly evaluate the teacher's performance on the job. The notion of academic freedom—of doubtful applicability to a high school—combined with the protection of tenure agreements, often results in each teacher's determining on his own what subject matter should be taught and how it should be presented. My experience has been that in any successful endeavor, those in charge must involve themselves in the details of day-to-day operations. The training of subordinates is one of the most important functions a person in charge must perform. In many schools, training of teachers consists only of granting them time off to attend conventions and symposia and requiring that they periodically take college courses in subjects of interest to them. Even in schools where adequate training and supervision exist, an incompetent or uninterested teacher is so difficult to fire that administrators frequently do not make the effort.

Academic programs must be better insulated from the unhealthy side effects of athletic programs and extracurricular activities. Even with the present surplus of teachers, the qualification to coach an athletic team frequently outweighs academic qualification in filling teacher vacancies. Coaches or potential coaches, who may not be as well qualified academically as other applicants, are often selected to fill vacancies in such areas as social studies, mathematics, science, and English. In one Virginia county, for example, staff reductions are based on strict seniority with the most junior persons transferred first. Principals may exempt athletic coaches and sponsors of certain extracurricular activities from this practice, but excellence in the classroom is not a basis for exemption. If communities desire better education for their youth, academic consideration must be given precedence over athletics and extracurricular activities.

Good teachers are essential to good education. Over 2,300 years ago, Plato said:

> I maintain that every one of us should seek out the best teacher he can find, first for ourselves, and then for the youth, regardless of expense or anything.

This is good advice today.

In this country, neither the names of educational institutions, nor their curricula, their diplomas or degrees represent a definitive and known standard of intellectual accomplishment. There are a number of standardized achievement tests that show the relative standing of students and schools against national norms, but not how much a child knows in an absolute sense. It is small consolation to learn that you know more than your contemporaries about swimming if none of you can swim.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress, a Government-funded organization, is now testing how much students actually know of various subjects and at various grade levels. But these tests are conducted on a statistical sampling basis and not given to all students. Moreover no one has attempted to define how much a child should know at certain stages of his academic career.

Historically, powerful lobbying organizations and unions have fought against efforts to measure the performance of teachers and school systems. They prefer the present system in which it is impossible to pinpoint responsibility.

By far the most important deficiency of our educational system is the absence of a professional tradition of self-correction. The scientist has to provide the results of his work to colleagues. The mark of any developed profession is the practice of correcting mistakes. But the educational establishment has no means to perform this function. The Office of Education will not do the job.

110 years ago, Congress created the Department of Education and charged it with broad responsibilities including:

> * * * collecting such statistics and facts as shall show the condition and progress of education in the several States and territories, diffusing such information respecting the organization and management of schools and school systems, and methods of teaching, as shall aid the people of the United States in the establishment and maintenance of efficient school systems, and otherwise promote the cause of education throughout the country.

Yet, in more than 100 years of existence, the Department of Education—now the Office of Education—has failed to come to grips with the need for proper accountability within the educational establishment.

Today, Mr. Chairman, the Office of Education is an organization devoted to self-protection. I suggest that the name be changed to "the Office of Education Protective Organization." I note that, in the last year, their employment numbers have increased by 350 people, or about 10 percent. They now have about 3,850 people. One would imagine that as the Office of Education grows in size, the quality of education would improve. But instead it has declined.

Therefore, a sensible person might ask: If we reduce the size of the Office of Education by 50 percent—and that would be just the beginning—perhaps we will increase the quality of our education by 50 percent. A logical person would conclude that, if increasing the size of an organization makes it less efficient, reducing its size is likely to make it more efficient.

In my opinion the National Education Association—which should be renamed the "National Education Protective Association"—and the other professional educators wield so much influence in the Office of Education that it is unable to act objectively in the public interest.

The burden thus falls on Congress and on this committee to act.

I recommend that you appoint a panel of nationally prominent persons in representative walks of life to develop National Scholastic Standards.

The standards should consist of specific, minimum competency requirements for various levels—second grade, fourth grade, sixth grade, and so on. In addition, there should be a formal system of tests to show not only the relative standing of students and schools against national norms but also whether students meet the minimum competency rerequirements. This would provide a yardstick to measure academic performance—a means of assessing achievement of individual students, effectiveness of teachers, and overall academic attainment of schools. Summaries of test results by school, district, and State would enable parents and educators to measure where their schools stand relative to the national standards and to other schools in the country. For the first time, parents would have a means to hold teachers and schools accountable for the quality of their work.

The States should be urged to adopt these standards and administer examinations. However, if local authorities do not provide the service, parents should be able to have their children tested against the national standards at government expenses.

The Federal Government provides services of this type in many areas which aren't nearly as important to our national well-being as education. An example is federal involvement in prescribing standards for drugs. When it comes to the physical health of people, I don't hear anyone complaining but when it comes to the mental development of our children, suddenly, there is an uproar over Federal control. When I see all this opposition to such standards, I sometimes wonder whether I am on the wrong side of the fence.

Mr. MOTTL. I don't think so.

Admiral RICKOVER. I am not so sure any more. I tried for years to do something to improve education, but countervailing pressures by educational lobbyists have been too powerful. Since Vietnam, the "educational complex" has grown more powerful than the military-industrial complex.

Nothing in my proposal would violate the constitutional separation of powers between Federal and State Governments nor counter our tradition of local and State control of schools. I envisage the rendering of a service, not regulation in any way, shape or manner, nothing mandatory.

The creation of national scholastic standards is the minimum step we must take. Lord Kelvin said: "When you can measure what you are speaking about * * * you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, * * * your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind."

The need for national scholastic standards has been recognized by some national leaders. For example, in 1963, President Kennedy became interested in this proposal and asked for my recommendations. He sent my proposal to the Commissioner on Education for study by the University of Chicago and the Carnegie Foundation. The President kept me informed of their progress. This effort ended with his untimely death. Of course, the educational establishment at that point immediately shelved the whole thing. President Nixon, in his education message of March 3, 1970, also urged national standards as a means of measuring the effectiveness of schools. Yet today we are no closer to having these standards.

The American public is becoming aware that our educational system needs correction. A poll taken in 1976 shows that, by a margin of 2 to 1, Americans are of the opinion that all students should be required to pass a standard nationwide examination to qualify for a high school diploma. A few States have made preliminary attempts to set standards. However, these efforts cannot substitute for national standards.

Our States and Congress have been most generous in providing funds for the education of our children. There has never been another nation in all history that has been as liberal in providing money for education as the United States. But it is a shame what we have gotten in return. Neither the States nor Congress have exercised adequate oversight of how the money has been spent.

The impetus must come from Congress to see that national standards are set. Congress cannot rely on the Office of Education, as has been amply proved year after year. If Congress lives up to its responsibility and sees that standards are set, I believe the public will demand their adoption by the education community.

We would be wise to heed the words of Aristotle, who said that the chief concern of the lawgiver must be the education of the young.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This completes my statement.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you, Admiral Rickover, for your brilliant statement; and if I may, I would like to proffer a couple of questions.

Admiral RICKOVER. Sir, I will be glad to answer them if I can.

Mr. MOTTL. Admiral Rickover, how would you respond to criticisms that your proposal for national scholastic standards or mine for minimum standards would lead to greater Federal control of education?

Admiral RICKOVER. The standards I propose would not lead to Federal control, because they are permissive standards. Their use would be left up to the States, local districts, and parents. In some cases we should welcome control, the Pure Food and Drug Act being a good example. There were vast violations in medicine, and the Federal Government stepped in. The Food and Drug standards are mandatory; these educational standards would not be.

Even if these standards were mandatory, I don't believe they would usurp local control. But, of course, in a democratic society, we do not believe in enforcing anything involving the mind. Therefore, they should not be mandatory. The standards and tests should simply be a service made available to parents. Then, if they want to, parents can find out how their youngsters are doing.

There are lots of services the Federal Government provides to individual citizens. You can write in and obtain all kinds of information from the Federal Government. Educational standards should be made available in the same way.

Mr. MOTTL. But even if we made it mandatory, do you think it would be a violation of our rights?

Admiral RICKOVER. I personnaly do not. When we go to war, we require mandatory registration for the draft; and when there is a national danger, we have other mandatory requirements. In my opinion, the danger we face from an uneducated population is just as bad as war from a national standpoint.

Mr. MOTTL. I think democracy depends on an educated electorate.

Admiral RICKOVER. Democracy means rule by the people. You cannot have proper rule by the people unless each citizen knows what he is doing. Initially democracy was aimed at the voting group in the community, which would be no larger than could hear. The ecclesia in ancient Greece used to meet on the hill of the Pnyx. Plato said that the largest number that a specific democracy could consist of would be 5,040 people, because that was all that could gather on that hill and hear.

Today, people can't depend solely on the spoken word to exercise their democratic responsibilities. Reading and writing are essential for those citizens who are to function fully as members of our democratic system.

Mr. MOTTL. Admiral Rickover, how do you respond to criticisms that minimum standards cannot be established on a national basis because of cultural and class differences which exist in this country?

Admiral RICKOVER. I believe these arguments are unfounded. Take the example of the many immigrants who came to this country. I am sure that, in the not too distant past, your ancestors, like mine came here one leap ahead of the sheriff.

Mr. MOTTL. My dad came from Prague, Czechoslovakia, so I am a first generation.

Admiral RICKOVER. I came to America from a foreign country when I was six years old. I could not read or write. But within 3 months, I was drawing books from the library.

There is nothing hard about learning; it is only being made to seem hard by people who want to find excuses. Any ordinary child can learn to read and write. In my school there were all kinds of immigrant children from all over the world, and we had no trouble in learning. This argument about "cultural bias" is beyond my comprehension.

Educational standards should be based on what a child should know to function effectively in society. Consideration of "cultural bias" should not be a factor in setting the standards, because the goal is to develop the same basic skills in all children, regardless of their heritage.

Mr. **Mottl**. Thank you, Admiral Rickover.

Admiral **Rickover**. Have I answered your question, sir?

Mr. **Mottl**. Yes, you have, I think, very satisfactorily.

Admiral Rickover, for which grade levels should standards and tests be developed in your opinion?

Admiral **Rickover**. I would start with the second grade and continue at 2-year intervals—second, fourth, sixth grade and so on through high school. This gives parents a chance to find out how their children are doing before it is too late. In this way, students who require additional instruction can be identified and helped before they are promoted to the next grade level.

Mr. **Mottl**. Why do you say that HEW should not do the job of setting standards?

Admiral **Rickover**. Look at their record, sir. Have they ever accomplished anything but increasing their numbers and drawing more pay? What have they done? Can they point to anything constructive?

They have voiced their opposition to national standards and tests. They are aided and abetted by the National Education Association, who just came out and said that standardized testing ought to be abolished. I suppose we should let little boys and girls decide for themselves whether the schools are doing their job.

This is sheer nonsense! Anyone who has some of this world's work to do naturally wonders what kind of people are running this country and why Congress not only permits the Office of Education to get away with it but also appropriates money for their continuation.

One of the finest things Congress could do is abolish them. You might start off by only cutting their appropriation in half. Then you could do away with them completely the following year.

Mr. **Mottl**. The last question I have here: For which subjects should standards be developed?

Admiral **Rickover**. I would limit the development of national standards to the basic skills—reading, writing, and mathematics. This would be the simplest way of getting started. If the standards found favor in the eyes of the people, they could be expanded to cover other subjects for which they might be a national consensus.

Mr. **Mottl**. We have the distinguished counsel, who will proffer a couple of questions to you.

Mr. **Cross**. Admiral, as I understand the proposal in your testimony, what you are suggesting is a voluntary system.

Admiral **Rickover**. Yes, sir.

Mr. **Cross**. The legislation which is before the committee is mandatory and would require high school diplomas not be awarded unless these standards are met.

Admiral **Rickover**. I am not against mandatory standards. The reason I recommend voluntary standards is to minimize concern over interference by the Federal Government. Why is it okay for the Government to cut taxes for corporations, but it is not all right for the

Federal Government to step in and do something about education? It all depends whose ox is gored.

Mr. **Cross**. The legislation before us does talk about a single test to be given in the 11th grade. As I understand, you favor giving the test in several different grades.

Admiral **Rickover**. Yes, sir. I think such a test is too little, too late. Remedial action at the 11th grade cannot be expected to correct educational deficiencies accumulated from the first grade.

Mr. **Cross**. I think there might be concern, too, that schools might encouarge students to leave rather than have them take the test and perhaps show a poor education.

What should the schools do with a student that does not meet the standard?

Admiral **Rickover**. I would not kick the students out. The schools should retain these students in school and take whatever remedial action is effective in bringing these students closer to the standard.

Hopefully, schools will not wait until high school to find out how the students are doing. Since we are a democracy, it is our responsibility to see that our children—our future citizens and rulers, are given the best education so they can exercise their franchise wisely and properly.

Mr. **Cross**. In your response to an earlier question, I take it you would have this examination given in only a few subject areas.

Admiral **Rickover**. Yes, sir, initially, the national standards should be limited to reading, writing and mathematics. You will have a hard enough time getting standards in these areas.

Mr. **Cross**. You talked about the Office of Education and your concerns with respect to it. Some agency is going to have to administer this bill. Who should it be?

Admiral **Rickover**. Once the standards are developed, there would be little administration required. I would appoint a special group, a very small group of people to administer the program. It would be a routine matter to make the standards and tests available to parents or school districts who wish to use them.

Mr. **Cross**. Who do you think should set the standards?

Admiral **Rickover**. The standards should be set by recognized people from various walks of life appointed by Congress.

Mr. **Cross**. Would you want that to include, for instance, parents and school officials?

Admiral **Rickover**. I would be wary of school officials, since many have voiced their opposition to such standards.

Mr. **Cross**. How about parents?

Admiral **Rickover**. I would hope that the people in the group are parents. However, I don't care if they are bachelors.

Mr. **Cross**. I meant parents representing that point of view.

Admiral **Rickover**. I know they all will have had parents.

Mr. **Cross**. One would hope science has not progressed that far. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. **Mottl**. Admiral, it is certainly refreshing and I want to congratulate you for your outstanding job here this morning, and I think many of the statements you made, if not all of them, carry a great deal of truth. And just as one Congressman here, I certainly appreciate your taking time from your busy schedule to be here as a proponent witness for this legislation.

Admiral RICKOVER. My labor is the labor of Sisyphus. For many years, I have kept on rolling the stone uphill and it always falls down. This is one of my periodic adventures. Hope springs eternal, sir, and I have never yet given up; although if you think I believe that something significant will come out of this, I wish to disabuse you.

In fighting for educational reform, you are fighting the National Education Association, you are fighting the Office of Education, you are always fighting your own people. You have the same situation in the military, too. You have it everywhere. The major fight you have is not with outsiders; it is within your own organization. But at least we can say we tried.

Mr. MOTTL. We are going to keep trying together. Thank you very much.

Admiral RICKOVER. You are in only your second term in Congress and you have not yet been subjected to those lobbyists. You are going to get it. Watch out.

Mr. MOTTL. I might not be here for my third term.

Admiral RICKOVER. If you keep on pushing this course, I might bet on you. Thank you very much, sir, for listening so patiently to what I have had to say.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Rickover follows:]

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS THE VIEWS OF THE
AUTHOR AND DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT
THE VIEWS OF THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
OR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

STATEMENT OF
ADMIRAL H.G. RICKOVER, U.S. NAVY
TO THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY, AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SEPTEMBER 12, 1977

Thank you for inviting me to testify on the quality of education and what needs to be done to improve it.

Over the last three decades, I have interviewed over 12,000 top graduates from some 150 different colleges and universities in search of young people with intelligence, integrity, and initiative who can meet the demands of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. In these people, I look not so much for technical competence--we will teach them that--but for the ability to think for themselves, to understand the basic principles of the courses they have taken, and to speak clearly.

I am often disappointed at what I find. Although a student's record may show that he has taken a variety of courses with impressive titles, his basic knowledge of fundamentals has declined markedly in relation to his counterpart of 15 years ago.

It is not uncommon for me to interview a recent graduate from a "good" college who has received a Masters Degree in Mathematics but is incapable of solving a tenth grade algebra problem. I have interviewed students receiving a Bachelors Degree in Electrical Engineering who do not know the difference between alternating current and direct current.

In case after case, not only in engineering, mathematics, and science but in history, foreign language, economics, and other fields, many students with excellent academic records are unable to discuss even the fundamentals of their disciplines. Yet most of them honestly believe they learned what was expected of him because they received good grades.

Because I am also responsible for training enlisted personnel for the nuclear program, I observe the products of our elementary and secondary schools. It is a disheartening experience. Within the past five years, I have been compelled to incorporate a remedial "pre-nuclear power school" because of the increasing attrition due to academic failures. I must now teach courses in the basics of mathematics, physics, and chemistry to high school graduates to prepare them to enter the nuclear power school. Here again, remember that we only accept into the nuclear program high school graduates of the highest mental caliber. You can appreciate the problem faced by the rest of the Navy in attempting to train personnel of lesser ability to handle the complex equipment now in use.

The Chief of Naval Personnel recently disclosed that the Navy is having a difficult time finding recruits who read well enough to do their job. He cited an example of a sailor who, because he could not read instructions, caused $250,000 in damage to a diesel engine by attempting to make repairs based solely on illustrations in the manual. Because of the increasing number of high school graduates who cannot read adequately, the Navy now requires many of its recruits to enroll in a six-week remedial course aimed at raising their reading ability to the sixth grade level.

There are many other signs that our educational system is falling behind the needs of our society.

In the mid-1960's scores of college entrance examinations began a decline. The drop is revealed in the scores for the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT)--the entrance examinations required by most colleges. The American College Tests, the Minnesota Scholastic Achievement Test, and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development show a similar trend. The recently released Wirtz report delves into the possible reasons for this decline and concludes there is an urgent need to improve the quality of education offered in our schools. The report calls for a restoration of the "traditions of critical reading and careful writing."

Last year the Private Higher Education Annual Report found "...an appalling decline in the preparation of newly admitted students in reading, writing, and mathematics."

The National Assessment of Educational Progress, a federally financed organization, recently studied writing samples of 7,500 youths. Only a tenth of the 9-year olds, a third of the 13-year olds, and half the 17-year olds could organize ideas on paper. Most wrote random sentences.

In 1975 the University of California reported that 75 percent of the state's best high school graduates failed a nationally-used English composition test. They could not express themselves, choose the right word to complete a thought, or organize their writing.

These problems tend to be masked, however, by the pernicious practice of grade inflation. At many colleges, three-quarters of the grades given are A's or B's. Grade inflation at high school appears to be just as prevalent.

The high school diploma and the college degree have been cheapened to the point where ofttimes they no longer stand for recognition of academic achievement. One example is the high school valedictorian who failed to meet the entrance requirements of a local university because his college board examination scores were but half of what the university expected.

Another is the high school graduate who sued a school system for "educational malpractice" complaining that he was not taught enough reading and writing to get and hold a decent job and that he was promoted from grade to grade despite a consistent record of failing marks.

Grade inflation is an effect rather than a cause--the inevitable result of restructuring courses and methods of teaching to demand less work on the part of the students. Where demands are low, more students get high grades. The student has been led to believe that he has mastered the course because he has done what the system calls for. He is happy; the teacher is happy; the school is happy; the parents are happy. Only society in unhappy.

Far from helping students, grade inflation robs them of a proper education. Too late they discover how little they really learned. Accepting a diploma without an education makes no more sense than getting vaccinated and not finding out if the vaccination took. A person who believes he is safely vaccinated but is not is a danger to himself and to others.

If our educational system is to be improved, parents and students must view education as the pursuit of knowledge and the development of essential skills such as reading, writing, and the ability to reason--not simply the pursuit of grades and diplomas.

Parents are partly responsible for inadequacies in our children's academic skill. They do not spend enough time with the child nor show sufficient interest in his school work. Further, many parents have come to substitute the judgment of professional educators for their own in gauging whether their children are receiving a proper education. Other parents figure they can buy better education if only enough money is spent. Consequently, our educational system is replete with monuments to this philosophy of "money cures all": elaborate school buildings, instructional media for which we pay three times as much as for textbooks; and calculators for children who do not even know arithmetic. But the education of our youth is something that requires personal dedication and a substantial investment of time, not just money.

Television has contributed greatly to the decline in the reading and writing skills of the child. Studies have shown that high school seniors have spent more of their lives in front of television than inside the classroom. Parents are derelict in allowing their children to become slaves of television. They watch television along with their children and thereby give parental approbation to the values that television transmits. Worse, some parents use television as an electr onic babysitter.

The television set is inferior to the book as a means of education. Watching is passive; reading is active. Television is non-stop, giving the viewer no time to think; he is rushed from one scene to the next. A book allows a person to stop, reflect, to turn back to a remembered passage--months or even years after the first reading. A book can encourage imagination and independent thought. Television, however, frequently leaves children with a false image of the real world. Television is conditioning them to think that any problem can be resolved in a half hour; or if difficult, perhaps an hour. It tends to shorten the attention spans of children, making the hard work of learning appear even more tedious when compared with the entertainment-oriented television. It fails to develop critical and analytical thought--qualities which we have prized throughout our history. Its primary purpose appears to be to make consumers of grownups and children.

Changes in society have no doubt played their part in the deterioration of the quality of education. But I believe the primary blame for the decline rests squarely on the educational establishment. Many educators would have us believe that the schools themselves have played no part in the decline of student ability. Self-deception is particularly rife in educational research.

In 1966 the Coleman report, typical of many similar studies by the U. S. Office of Education, came to the startling conclusion that the socioeconomic status of a child's classmates was a more important influence on his achievement than his teacher. This conclusion was astonishing because the offspring of countless uneducated immigrants today occupy leading positions in business, the professions, public life, and the arts. Yet, influential educators, intellectuals, journalists, legislators, administrators, and judges quickly and uncritically accepted this hypothesis.

Coleman's finding became the rationale for many efforts to require more racially balanced schools, and resulted in vast expenditures of public funds; political and racial arguments; and dislocations in school systems. Later investigation showed the data to have been misinterpreted and incorrectly evaluated. After years of support for and identification with the policy of mandatory racial balance as an educational goal, Coleman, in 1975, subsequent to criticism of his thesis, changed his position. He not only dissociated himself from the legal and political decisions engendered by his report, but admitted that schools did, perhaps, make a difference in the achievement of children.

Left to their own designs, educators, in the name of innovation, have made it possible for many students to avoid courses that would provide a solid grounding in the basic academic subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics. Studies have documented declines in enrollment in basic academic courses. In some cases, courses in basic skills have been supplanted by electives or extracurricular activity. In others, the total number of instructional hours per school year has declined.

In an effort to instill more relevance in education, many schools have invested substantial resources in programs which seem directed more toward providing amusement than toward developing children's ability to sort facts and make intelligent decisions. Couched in the unintelligible jargon of systems analysis and other pseudo-sciences, these programs place a high priority on freedom of choice in course selection without first ensuring that the choices are structured to meet academic needs.

Much experimentation has focused on ways to give the student greater opportunity for "creativity." The ends to which this policy is taken are absurd. One school superintendent forbade the use of coloring books on the grounds that they force pupils to confine their artistic efforts within fixed lines. Another superintendent of a big city school system felt that since children were allowed to be creative at home, they should be allowed to be creative at school. The resultant milling around of children in the schools led to chaos. This was a predictable result, since most children are not competent to decide what is in their own best interest or how much creative freedom they should enjoy.

This drift in educational thinking strikes at the very basis and fabric of society. Schools are fostering attitudes in students that ill-prepare them for the harsh realities of the world. Take the idea that learning must be easy and preferably entertaining. This idea is cruel to the child and dangerous to society, for children grow up believing that they need not struggle to excel.

In the attempt to make learning fun, and I believe to make themselves popular, many teachers and administrators have de-emphasized disciplined thought and work habits, and stressed creativity, individuality, and "feeling", to the detriment of academic achievement. What this means in teaching English, for example, is a turning away from serious reading and closely reasoned writing. Students, especially at the high school level, are led to believe that oral and written expression need no real effort. Feelings are often placed ahead of language as the primary tool of expression. In consequence, students are cheated; they do not face the difficulties inherent in good writing, and do not develop the ability to write well. This approach may free instructors from tedious grading of papers and themes; however, it does not develop the necessary skills.

One of the truths of life is that if you want to influence others, it is not enough to know a subject; you must also be able to express what you know. That is what makes the ability to write clearly a most valuable skill. But many students simply do not value writing skill in a world they see as predominantly technical. Teachers who hold grammatical achievements in small esteem reinforce this notion.

The "learning is easy" movement has also affected mathematics. In the late 1950's, "new math" was hailed as a revolutionary new method of teaching a subject that generations of children had found "distasteful," or "not fun." By abolishing the systematic progression from arithmetic through algebra and geometry, new math was supposed to make it easy for children to understand and enjoy mathematics. The results were predictable. The money spent on training teachers in the new math and rewriting textbooks was largely wasted. Millions of young Americans have learned something of sets, variables, and binary operations. But many have failed to learn the arithmetic needed to balance checkbooks or figure income taxes, and most have a poor foundation from which to move to higher mathematics, physics, and engineering.

There is a passage in the Talmud that reads: "The world is upheld by children who study." Learning can be interesting, rewarding, and exciting, but it requires effort. It is work! No learning takes place, just as no ditch gets dug, without work Mental sweat is required of the student who would acquire the skills, concepts, and information necessary to master a course. Preaching the doctrine that learning should be easy implies that society has an obligation to make life easy, and promotes an already far too prevalent attitude against work. If our goal is to entertain our children, we can do so far more cheaply than by sending them to schools.

Despite growing disenchantment by many parents, teachers, and students with undisciplined learning and experimentation, these programs continue to receive strong support from educational leaders. The new head of the U. S. Office of Education recently spoke of alternative educational approaches for high school students, contending that children today "are more sophisticated." He attributes their earlier maturation to "television and other factors." From my experience, many of today's students are academically immature and unsophisticated.

"Alternative educational approaches" should not detract from a school's primary mission of educating students in the basic skills. The following teacher's note on a report card, as it appeared in the Georgia Education Digest, best expresses this point: "Alvin excels in initiative, group integration, responsiveness, and activity participation. Now if he'd only learn to read and write."

Teachers share in the blame for the condition of our schools today. If students had no teaching machines or visual aids, no buildings, counselors or administrators, they would still learn if they had competent teachers. As a group, today's graduates destined for teaching positions do not possess a solid academic background. Some educationists hold the fallacious belief that expertise in classroom management can supplant knowledge. While classroom management, discipline, and presentation are important, they are no substitute for competence in the subject being taught. In Europe, teachers are required to know the subject matter. Those teaching above the elementary level have advanced degrees in their field. But in this country, teachers often are not required to have a mastery of a subject they teach. What many states consider as important qualifications are the number of education courses in teaching techniques—not competence or skill in subject matter. Restrictive state laws promote this view. In today's climate, a smart prospective teacher will avoid an advanced degree because the higher salary it commands makes it more difficult to get a job.

One publisher of science materials for junior and senior high schools touted his product as follows:

> "And it does not require specific subject background on the part of the earth science teacher."

In other words, the teacher does not need to know much earth science in order to use these teaching materials. But this problem is more widespread: foreign languages are taught in many high schools by those not fluent in them; geometry and algebra by those who know little mathematics. Most English teachers are literature majors who resent teaching writing skills or who are unqualified to teach them.

Studies have shown that, on the average, prospective teachers exhibit the lowest academic ability of any major group in higher education. One study revealed the startling fact that, in terms of high school academic performance, teachers ranked above only one other group—that composed of students who had dropped out of college with failing marks. This conclusion is supported by the Educational Testing Service which found that those taking the Graduate Record Examination in the field of education consistently made lower scores than those in any other field.

Low ability, combined with second-rate training, means that many students finishing teacher education programs are not competent to teach. For instance, one Florida county, in 1976, found that one third of the applicants for teaching jobs failed an eighth grade level general knowledge test. Confronted with such evidence, the state's Board of Regents decided to require professional competency tests before a prospective teacher can graduate from a state university.

When unqualified people are admitted to the teaching ranks, their incompetency either goes unnoticed because of inadequate teacher performance measures, or, once discovered, the incompetent teacher is protected from removal by tenure. Today the laws are so restrictive in most states that superintendents and school boards seldom even try to dismiss incompetents. In a 23-year period, Cleveland, Ohio's largest school system managed to dismiss only one tenured teacher. Over a two-year period ending in March, 1975, there were only fourteen tenured teachers dismissed in the entire state of California. A rare exception occurred in April of this year when the school board in Goochland County, Virginia fired an elementary school teacher on grounds of incompetence because of her atrocious grammar. The teacher, a veteran of twelve years in the Goochland school system, was dismissed after a parent complained about the grammar in a third- and fourth-grade social studies guide the teacher had prepared for her students.

Among the questions the teacher had prepared were these, reproduced verbatim:

> "What did the sculpture told the archeologists ?"
>
> "Why did the Maya sailed to other ports ?"
>
> "How many names did each Maya had ?"

"The grammar was atrocious, " the school superintendent said: "I would just assume a college graduate wouldn't have this sort of weakness. "

With that comment, the superintendent hit upon the fundamental weakness in our approach to education in this country. We have all assumed that the 120 billion dollars we spent in 1975 and all sums before it is resulting in well-educated children.

To attract intelligent teachers, schools need to make teaching professional. Although many teachers are incompetent and probably paid more than they deserve, their pay in general is not sufficiently high to attract top-flight people to the profession. Labor agreements between school districts and teachers effectively rule out remuneration based on merit. Extra stipends are payable for coaching or extracurricular activities but not for classroom performance. Ideally there should be a merit pay system or other means of recognizing excellence in teaching. The reward of watching young minds develop is not always enough to sustain lifetime dedication to teaching.

Pay, however, does not guarantee performance. In the Federal Government and in private industry, there are many examples of people who, although well paid, do not perform to their capacity. However, parents can encourage schools to provide conditions more conducive to professional teaching. For example, at the high school level, because the teacher himself must handle large amounts of the clerical and administrative workload, there are great pressures on teachers to simplify tests and grading, minimize assignments, and avoid written work. It is not surprising in these circumstances that true and false examinations or multiple choice tests tend to replace the written assignments so essential to the development of writing and reasoning skills. How many teachers are willing to devise comprehensive tests and assignments when they must draft, type, and reproduce them essentially on their own time? The availability of administrative and clerical support for teachers would probably enhance the quality of education and teacher morale more than the investment of equivalent funds in teacher salaries.

On-the-job evaluation and training of teachers by experienced and competent supervisors is needed to rid our system of bad teaching. School teachers are among the most unsupervised workers in society. Many administrators never truly evaluate the teacher's performance on the job. The notion of academic freedom—of doubtful applicability to a high school—combined with the protection of tenure agreements, often results in each teacher determining on his own what subject matter should be taught and how it should be presented. My experience has been that in any successful endeavor, those in charge must involve themselves in the details of day-to-day operations. The training of subordinates is one of the most important functions a person in charge must perform. In many schools, training of teachers consists only of granting them time off to attend conventions and symposia and requiring that they periodically take college courses in subjects of interest to them. Even in schools where adequate training and supervision exist, an incompetent or uninterested teacher is so difficult to fire that administrators frequently do not make the effort.

Academic programs must be better insulated from the unhealthy side effects of athletic programs and extracurricular activities. Even with the present surplus of teachers, the qualification to coach an athletic team frequently outweighs academic qualification in filling teacher vacancies. Coaches or potential coaches, who may not be as well qualified academically as other applicants, are often selected to fill vacancies in such areas as social studies, mathematics, science and English. In one Virginia county, for example, staff reductions are based on strict seniority with the most junior persons transferred first. Principals may exempt athletic coaches and sponsors of certain extracurricular activities from this practice, but excellence in the classroom is not a basis for exemption. If communities desire better education for their youth, academic consideration must be given precedence over athletics and extracurricular activities.

Good teachers are essential to good education. Over 2,300 years ago, Plato said:

> "I maintain that every one of us should seek out the best teacher he can find, first for ourselves, and then for the youth, regardless of expense or anything."

This is good advice today.

In this country, neither the names of educational institutions, nor their curricula, their diplomas or degrees represent a definitive and known standard of intellectual accomplishment. There are a number of standardized achievement tests that show the relative standing of students and schools against national norms, but not how much a child knows in an absolute sense. It is small consolation to learn that you know more than your contemporaries about swimming if none of you can swim.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress, a government-funded organization, is now testing how much students actually know of various subjects and at various grade levels. But these tests are conducted on a statistical sampling basis and not given to all students. Moreover, no one has attempted to define how much a child should know at certain stages of his academic career.

Historically, powerful lobbying organizations and unions have fought against efforts to measure the performance of teachers and school systems. They prefer the present system in which it is impossible to pinpoint responsibility.

By far the most important deficiency of our educational system is the absence of a professional tradition of self-correction. The scientist has to provide the results of his work to colleagues. The mark of any developed profession is the practice of correcting mistakes. But the educational establishment has no means to perform this function. The Office of Education will not do the job. One hundred and ten years ago, Congress created the Department of Education and charged it with broad responsibilities including:

> ". . . collecting such statistics and facts as shall show the condition and progress of education in the several States and territories, diffusing such information respecting the organization and management of schools and school systems, and methods of teaching, as shall aid the people of the United States in the establishment and maintenance of efficient school systems, and otherwise promote the cause of education throughout the country."

Yet, in more than 100 years of existence, the Department of Education—now the Office of Education—has failed to come to grips with the need for proper accountability within the educational establishment. In my opinion, the National Education Association and other professional educators wield so much influence in the Office of Education that it is unable to act objectively and in the public interest. The burden thus falls on Congress and on this Committee to act.

I recommend that you appoint a panel of nationally prominent persons in representative walks of life to develop National Scholastic Standards.

The standards should consist of specific, minimum competency requirements for various levels—second grade, fourth grade, sixth grade, and so on. In addition, there should be a formal system of tests to show not only the relative standing of students and schools against national norms but also whether students meet the minimum competency requirements. This would provide a yardstick to measure academic performance—a means of assessing achievement of individual students, effectiveness of teachers, and overall academic attainment of schools. Summaries of test results by school, district, and state would enable parents and educators to measure where their schools stand relative to the national standards and to other schools in the country. For the first time, parents would have a means to hold teachers and schools accountable for the quality of their work.

The states should be urged to adopt these standards and administer examinations. However, if local authorities do not provide the service, parents should be able to have their children tested against the national standards at government expense.

Nothing in this proposal would violate the constitutional separation of powers between federal and state governments, nor counter our tradition of local and state control of schools. I envisage the rendering of a service, not regulation in any way, shape, or manner.

The creation of National Scholastic Standards is the minimum step we must take. Lord Kelvin said: "When you can measure what you are speaking about. . . you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, . . . your knowledge is of a meager and unsatisfactory kind."

The need for National Scholastic Standards has been recognized by some national leaders. For example, in 1963 President Kennedy became interested in this proposal and asked for my recommendations. He sent my proposal to the Commissioner on Education for study by the University of Chicago and the Carnegie Foundation. The President kept me informed of their progress. This effort ended with his untimely death. President Nixon in his education message of March 3, 1970, also urged national standards as a means of measuring the effectiveness of schools. Yet today we are no closer to having these standards.

The American public is becoming aware that our educational system needs correction. A poll taken in 1976 shows that, by a margin of 2 to 1, Americans are of the opinion that all students should be required to pass a standard nationwide examination to qualify for a high-school diploma. A few states have made preliminary attempts to set standards. However these efforts cannot substitute for national standards.

Our states and Congress have been most generous in providing funds for the education of our children. Our per capita expenditure for education is greater than that of any other country in the world. But neither the states nor Congress has exercised adequate oversight of how the money has been spent.

The impetus must come from Congress to see that national standards are set. Congress cannot rely on the Office of Education. If Congress lives up to its responsibility and sees that standards are set, I believe the public will demand their adoption by the education community.

We would be wise to heed the words of Aristotle who said that the chief concern of the lawgiver must be the education of the young.

Our next witness is the very esteemed president of Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, Dr. Phillip Shriver, who was the former Dean of the college of arts and sciences at Penn State University and he has been the past president at Miami University, which is not only a fine academic institution but it has been noted as the cradle of coaches, of which we are all very proud.

Without further ado I would like to introduce Dr. Phillip Shriver, who will testify here this morning. Dr. Shriver.

STATEMENT OF PHILLIP R. SHRIVER, PRESIDENT, MIAMI UNIVERSITY, OXFORD, OHIO

Dr. **Shriver.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen. It is a pleasure to be here and I have purposely made my testimony brief in the hope there will be questions that will be directed to me to amplify what I am saying.

I appear before you as both a teacher and an administrator, a teacher of American history over the past 31 years and president of Miami University since 1965. Raised in a family whose principal breadwinner was a schoolteaching father whose teaching career spanned 48 years, I believe I bring some perspective to the bill which you are considering today.

My premise quite simply is this: It is not how many courses a student has taken that counts or how many credits he or she has earned; rather it is what competency or proficiency the student has achieved as a consequence of educational experience.

For too long we mistakenly have believed that, if enough courses were taken and enough credits were earned, the student was, in fact, educated. This could be called the "green stamp" approach to education—get enough green stamps in your stamp book and you can turn the book in for your price, whether it be a high school diploma or a college degree.

On August 18 in my annual state of the university address to the faculty of Miami University, in proposing objectives for the coming academic year, I included the following:

> Explore as a possible requirement for graduation a test of minimal proficiency in ability to communicate, including not only the mastery of basic grammar but also the ability to organize ideas clearly and logically, and the ability to use language for effective communication.
>
> Development of literacy is a task for the entire university, not just the English department. Concern for it must span the entire period of a student's contact with the university and not just the freshman year. Each staff member, by example and specific attention in instructional programs, should promote a level of literacy befitting collegiate education.
>
> Whatever their future calling, students will find that their effectiveness in great measure will depend on their ability to express their views clearly.

Please realize that Miami is one of the Nation's oldest and finest universities, with a student body that stands among the top in level of competence in a recent national study. How, then, can I seriously call for a literacy test as a requirement for graduation from a university of this quality?

I do so in all seriousness, and I daresay that the presidents of all other colleges and universities in the Nation could call, with equal candor, for the same thing; for the problem we address is a problem that is national in scope, not State or local. It permeates the very fiber of our educational system, a system which has witnessed for 14 consecutive years a steady decline in the test scores, both verbal and mathematical, of students graduating from high school and entering college.

One of the largest State universities in Ohio has found that fully 25 percent of its entering freshmen are not prepared for college level work but must back up to take remediation in such subjects as English and mathematics.

I have received letters from college graduates applying for jobs at Miami who literally could not spell the names of the jobs for which they were applying. There are across the country colleges where grades of "D" and "F" have virtually disappeared yet whose graduates have great difficulty in composing a letter of application.

I have been teaching history since 1947. Even as president, I still teach at least one course a year. In many respects the students I am teaching in 1977 are as well prepared and as knowledgeable as they were in 1947 or 1957 or 1967. Yet in other respects they are woefully behind their predecessors of those decades.

In particular is this true in their capacity to express their thoughts in writing in clear, lucid, precise language. For all too many the written essay, the report, the review are unknown to them. Rather their competencies lie in responding to short-answer, objective questions which can be machined scored and graded.

Little wonder that, when students are finally compelled to write examinations or essays or letters, the end products appear heavy with misspellings, grammatical errors, and poor organization, usually conspicuously worse than those of previous generations of college students.

I am talking about a prevalent deficiency which some of us have begun to call functional illiteracy. Much has been written to explain the decline we have been witnessing: the relaxation of teaching and learning standards in schools at all levels, the absence of homework, grade inflation, television, the Vietnam war, Watergate, the change in family roles.

Doubtless each one of these explanations has contributed to the functional illiteracy of many of our young people—functional illiteracy which is fast becoming a national scandal.

One of my colleagues the other day observed that when he had been in college he had been expected to know enough Latin to read the words on his diploma. Only half facetiously he added that now he hoped that those being graduated would know enough English to understand the words on theirs.

To conclude, I see in this bill for which I am speaking this morning a move to establish the principle of competency or proficiency in the most basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics as necessary qualifications for high school graduation.

Frankly, I would prefer that this principle would be adopted by State and local schools across the Nation without Federal compulsion. Were standards of proficiency and competency to be established by school systems across the Nation, university administrators such as

I would not have to be calling for literacy tests for prospective college graduates but rather could anticipate that those coming to college would be prepared to handle college level work without the necessity for extensive remediation.

As matters now stand, we are truly at the crossroads. All of the years of education will not count for a thing if a person can't read, can't write, and consequently can't get a job.

Thank you for permitting me to appear before you this morning.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Shriver follows:]

Statement of Dr. Phillip R. Shriver, President, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, concerning H.R. 6088, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require state educational agencies to establish basic standards of educational proficiency applicable to secondary school students:

I appear before you as both a teacher and an administrator, a teacher of American history over the past thirty-one years and President of Miami University since 1965. Raised in a family whose principal breadwinner was a schoolteaching father those teaching career spanned forty-eight years, I believe I bring some perspective to the bill which you are considering today.

My premise quite simply is this: it is not how many courses a student has taken that counts, or how many credits he or she has earned; rather, it is what competency or proficiency the student has achieved as a consequence of educational experience. For too long, we mistakenly have believed that, if enough courses were taken and enough credits were earned, the student was, in fact, educated. This could be called the "green stamp" approach to education--get enough green stamps in your stamp book and you can turn the book in for your prize, whether it be a high school diploma or a college degree.

On August 19, in my annual "State of the University Address" to the faculty of Miami University, in proposing objectives for the coming academic year, I included the following:

"Explore as a possible requirement for graduation a test of minimal proficiency in ability to communicate, including not only the mastery of basic grammar but also the ability to organize ideas clearly and logically and the ability to use language for effective communication. Development of literacy is a task for the entire University, not just the English Department. Concern for it must span the entire period of a student's contact with the University and not just the freshman year. Each staff member, by example and specific attention in instructional programs, should promote a level of literacy befitting collegiate education. Whatever their future calling, students will find that their effectiveness in great measure will depend on their ability to express their views clearly."

Please realize that Miami is one of the nation's oldest and finest universities, with a student body that stands among the top in level of competence in a recent national study. How, then, can I seriously call for a literacy test as a requirement for graduation from a university of this quality? I do so in all seriousness, and I daresay that the presidents of all other colleges and universities in the nation could call, with equal candor, for the same thing, for the problem we address is a problem that is national in scope, not state or local. It permeates the very fiber of our educational system, a system which has witnessed for fourteen consecutive years a steady decline in the test scores, both verbal and mathematical, of students graduating from high school and entering college. One of the largest state universities in Ohio has found that fully twenty-five percent of its entering freshmen are not prepared for college-level work, but must back up to take remediation in such subjects as English and mathematics. I have received letters from college graduates applying for jobs at Miami who literally could not spell the names of the jobs for which they were applying. There are across the country colleges where grades of "D" and "F" have virtually disappeared, yet whose graduates have great difficulty in composing a letter of application.

I have been teaching history since 1947. Even as President, I still teach at least one course a year. In many respects, the students I am teaching in 1977 are as well-prepared and as knowledgeable as they were in 1947, or '57, or '67. Yet, in other respects, they are woefully behind their predecessors of those decades. In particular is this true in their capacity to express their thoughts in writing, in clear, lucid, precise language. For all too many, the written essay, the report, the review are unknown to them. Rather, their competencies lie in responding to short-answer, objective questions which can be machine scored and graded. Little wonder that, when students are finally compelled to write examinations, or essays, or letters, the end products appear heavy with misspellings, grammatical errors, and poor organization, usually conspicuously worse than those of previous generations of college students.

I am talking about a prevalent deficiency which some of us have begun to call functional illiteracy. Much has been written to explain the decline we have been witnessing: the relaxation of teaching and learning standards in schools at all levels, the absence of homework, grade inflation, television, the Vietnam War, Watergate, the change in family roles. Doubtless each one of these explanations has contributed to the functional illiteracy of many of our young people, functional illiteracy which is fast becoming a national scandal.

One of my colleagues the other day observed that, when he had been in college, he had been expected to know enough Latin to read the words on his diploma. Only half facetiously, he added that now he hoped that those being graduated would know enough English to understand the words on theirs.

To conclude, I see in this bill for which I am speaking this morning a move to establish the principle of competency, or proficiency, in the most basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics as necessary qualifications for high school graduation. Frankly, I would prefer that this principle would be adopted by state and local schools across the nation, without federal compulsion. Were standards of proficiency and competency to be established by school systems across the nation, university administrators such as I would not have to be calling for literacy tests for prospective college graduates, but rather could anticipate that those coming to college would be prepared to handle college-level work without the necessity for extensive remediation. As matters now stand, we are truly at the crossroads. All of the years of education will not count for a thing if a person can't read, can't write, and consequently can't get a job.

Thank you for permitting me to appear before you this morning.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you very much for your outstanding testimony, Dr. Shriver. I could not have had a better proponent witness to say the things that have to be said and the reason and the need for competency testing.

I think you stated that you are reluctant, as I am, to see the Federal Government intrude in an area that generally has been reserved for the State and local school district. But I think this is analogous to what we see here in the Congress with regard to no-fault insurance. Many of the proponents of no-fault insurance here in Congress feel when the States—only 19 States have enacted no-fault insurance—are reluctant to act, that is when the Federal Government has the obligation to come in to do something, at least to prod the State and local school districts to do something. This was my main intention—to do something.

Do you feel that Ohio being an example—we have no minimum competency testing at this point, do we?

Dr. SHRIVER. None whatsoever at any level.

Mr. MOTTL. Berea is the first school district, in my congressional district, to initiate it this fall. Dr. Andrisek is going to testify here Thursday as a proponent witness. But do you think that the Federal Government should act in some way, and what can we do constructively to prod the States in this area?

Dr. SHRIVER. The mere fact that we are having this hearing this morning, Mr. Chairman, would indicate that the Congress has begun to act and that there are those across the Nation beginning to note and be concerned.

I would take a page from the comments of my predecessor, Admiral Rickover, and believe that, if nothing else, were there national norms to be made available to all States and all communities, then there would be some measurements against which the adequacy of our school systems could be tested.

I would agree fully with the Admiral that there is no reason why there has to be a regional difference or a community-by-community difference. I do believe that the mere fact that colleges and universities across the Nation are today finding themselves with mounting numbers of freshmen entrants who have never written an essay in high school would attest the need for some kind of national effort to turn the situation around.

I believe that, whether that effort is applied as you are suggesting in your bill or whether it is applied through suggested norms, much good will come from it.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you. Dr. Shriver, what grades would you start the competency tests at—elementary, secondary?

Dr. SHRIVER. I would see advantage in a competency examination at the end of the elementary period. I appreciate that there are different definitions of what constitutes the elementary years but most would see the sixth grade, I think, as one level by which time there should be certain achievements made by students.

I believe another would be at the end of the junior high school years, ninth grade in most instances, and I think another certainly by the 12th grade.

Mr. MOTTL. Now, should the Congress use the carrot or the stick approach? What I mean by that: The carrot approach would be saying that all school districts, whether it be local or State, would secure Federal funds for their testing programs. The stick approach would be: If they do not have minimal competency testing, we would withhold Federal funds. Which of these two approaches would you use or would you have another approach?

Dr. SHRIVER. Personally, I would prefer to see the Federal Government not using either carrot or stick in this. I can appreciate the need for motivation. I would take exception to my predecessor's last comment, which was to the effect he was dubious there would ever be anything come out of this. I think there is enough concern now brought across the land at the grassroots level that something is going to come out of it.

I have been giving State University addresses for 13 years at Miami and, until this particular proposal was made—which was not the front and center proposal—to require literacy tests for those to graduate from college. Until this was made, I have not had the attention given to anything I have said as has been given this. I received letters from all over the State and outside. I do believe you will find that there is a greater concern for this than most here in Washington would believe exists.

Mr. MOTTL. Do you have any questions?

Mr. CROSS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe Miami University is a rather large teacher training university as well.

Dr. SHRIVER. We do prepare teachers. It is not the largest division of the university; it is now the third-largest academic division on our campus.

Mr. CROSS. What would your perspective be on the qualification and ability of teachers and what the teacher training institutions could do to better prepare them so that we would not have the problems that Admiral Rickover cited?

Dr. SHRIVER. I think there is a challenge to each college and university preparing teachers to assure that those going out to each have competency in the instruction, in lucid expression orally and in writing, whether this person is going to teach English, history, geography, physics, or what have you.

Mr. CROSS. Are you suggesting some sort of examination for them over and above what you mentioned in your statement?

Dr. SHRIVER. I believe this should be an expectation of our teacher-preparing institutions, that they do assure that their products are well prepared in this regard.

Mr. CROSS. Has Miami instituted such a procedure?

Dr. SHRIVER. We have a 1-year requirement for all freshman at this point in English. We are considering at this time a literacy test to be given in midstream, either at the end of the sophomore year or the beginning of the junior year which, for those students unable to pass it, will necessitate their taking advanced composition in the junior and/or senior years before they can graduate.

We have noted that, once the freshman year has passed and the freshman English requirement has been met, atrophy sets it. There is abroad among freshmen the notion that, once you have taken your

English in the freshman year, it is over and from that point on you can go back to your old habits.

We mean to turn this about. We mean to prevent atrophy by insisting on subsequent examinations to keep proficiency levels high.

Mr. **Cross.** Is this for teachers?

Dr. **Shriver.** This will be for every student, including the teacher candidates.

Mr. **Cross.** Do you do anything special or specific for teachers-training candidates?

Dr. **Shriver.** Not at this point. But we intend to see this seriously considered by the university council this year for across-campus, all-division requirement.

Mr. **Cross.** What about in-service training programs for teachers already out in the field?

Dr. **Shriver.** I cannot speak to this. I am unaware we have been in any discussions to date.

Mr. **Cross.** Miami does not engage in offering those?

Dr. **Shriver.** Not that I am aware of.

Mr. **Cross.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. **Mottl.** We are going to have Mr. Jennings, the scholarly counsel for the majority, proffer some questions.

Mr. **Jennings.** Do you agree with Admiral Rickover's comments about the quality of teachers and candidates for the teaching profession, that they tend to be less capable than candidates for other professions; and, if you do, why do you believe that is so?

Dr. **Shriver.** I said before, Mr. Jennings, I am one who has taught for 31 years and I am the son of one who taught over the span of 48 years. I would have a hard time accepting the belief that because you are a teacher you are necessarily ill-equipped, poorly prepared or unable to do other things in the professional sense.

I would agree, Mr. Jennings, there have been instances in which poorly prepared persons have gone into the classroom or instances in which those without true commitment to what they are doing have gone into the classroom. But I would also believe that we have had some of the finest men and women of our Nation giving their lives to a calling which is the preparation of young men and women to become citizens of this republic.

Mr. **Jennings.** Have you found it necessary at Miami to institute remedial English classes for freshmen? You were talking about how you would extend the English requirement into the 2nd and 3rd years. But have you actually started remedial classes for freshmen?

Dr. **Shriver.** We don't have remedial classes per se. We have developmental education instead, which is in a small group, a one-on-one or one-to-two- or three-type, addressing the problem in a bid to overcome deficiencies that have been observed. We do not have high school level courses being given for college credit.

Mr. **Jennings.** Your remarks on the writing ability of students seems to be very inappropriate, and that seems to be a common thing which is occurring in testimony. From your experience as a history professor, have you found that the abilities of students have declined uniformly or have certain types of students maintained their abilities such as students from private schools as compared to public schools or students from suburbs as compared to urban school districts or whatever?

Dr. **Shriver.** I am not prepared to make a distinction, public or private, urban and suburban, rural or what have you. I would note that I am still receiving absolutely brilliant essays from some students. I am also noting that I am receiving some of the poorest I have ever received from others. And I am concerned that over the total span there is a recognizable declination in ability to write.

Mr. **Jennings.** Across the board?

Dr. **Shriver.** Across the board.

Mr. **Jennings.** Thank you.

Mr. **Mottl.** Thank you, Dr. Shriver. We certainly appreciate your outstanding remarks here, and your testimony certainly will be helpful to the subcommittee as well as to the Congress as a whole.

We are going to conclude these hearings now and will reconvene on Thursday, when we will have other witnesses here at 9:45.

[Whereupon, at 11:15 a.m. the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene at 9:45 a.m. Thursday, September 15, 1977.]

PART 11: A BILL TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL PROFICIENCY STANDARDS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1977

House of Representatives,
Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary
and Vocational Education,
Committee on Education and Labor,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:50 a.m., in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ronald Mottl, presiding.

Members present: Representatives Mottl, Heftel, Kildee, and Quie.

Staff present: John F. Jennings, majority counsel; Christopher Cross, minority senior education consultant; and Nancy L. Kober, staff assistant.

Mr. Mottl. The subcommittee will come to order.

We are privileged to have before us today four prominent educators from various sections of the country who will testify on H.R. 6088, a bill which would require all States to administer minimum competency tests to high school students before the students receive their diploma.

This is the second hearing on this most vital matter, which is closely intertwined with the efforts of many Americans to return the emphasis in education to teaching and learning the basics of reading, writing and mathematics.

Earlier this week, the subcommittee had the opportunity to hear comprehensive testimony from Admiral Rickover, a frequent commentator on our educational system, and from Dr. Phillip Shriver, president of Miami University of Ohio.

I think that there is general agreement among us, both as parents and as professionals, that some sort of competency testing should be instituted in our schools. Most of the discussion I have heard to date indicates concern, and perhaps rightfully so, about the Federal Government operating the testing program.

Consequently, I plan to introduce a substitute bill, which would allow local systems to initiate minimum competency testing on a voluntary basis. A national commission will be available to set up standards in local schools, and be reimbursed through Federal funds appropriated by Congress.

Hopefully, this provision will be part of the comprehensive education bill to come out of the 95th Congress some time in 1978.

Today's testimony will be presented by Dr. Mary Berry, Assistant Secretary of Education of HEW; Mrs. Carolyn Warner, superintendent of public instruction, Arizona State Department of Education; Mr. Barry Beal, supervisor, department of development and evaluation, Denver Public Schools; and Mr. John R. Andrisek, superintendent of Berea City Schools in Ohio, and a constituent of mine.

Dr. Mary Berry is a graduate of Howard University, and received her doctorate from the University of Michigan in 1966, and is a 1970 graduate of the University of Michigan Law School. She has held a number of teaching and administrative posts, and before assuming her challenging position at HEW earlier this year, Dr. Berry was chancellor of the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Mrs. Warner is a highly successful businesswoman, who comes from a prominent educational family. She was elected to her present position in 1974 with the second largest plurality ever received in that State. Under her able direction, the Arizona schools have made tremendous forward strides.

Mr. Andrisek is in his 5th year as Berea superintendent, and directs the operations of one of greater Cleveland's largest school systems. Prior to that, he held a number of administrative positions in Berea's progressive system, and was assistant superintendent before being elevated in 1973. He is to be commended for having just recently started minimum competency testing, and it is the first school system in Ohio to do so.

Mr. Beal has been with the Denver schools since 1956, and has been administering the system's minimum competency testing for the past several years. The Denver testing program has been in effect since early in the 1960's, and has proven to be an extremely useful vehicle in helping Denver children to master the basics.

We will go in the following order, if we may. Good morning to all of you, and thank you for sitting up here at the table. We will first hear from Dr. Mary Berry, and then we will listen to Mr. John Andrisek, and then to Mrs. Carolyn Warner and then Mr. Barry Beal.

Is that all right with the panel?

Without further ado, we will now hear from Dr. Mary Berry.

STATEMENT OF MARY BERRY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Dr. Berry. Thank you, Congressman, I am pleased to comment on H.R. 6088, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, to require State educational agencies to establish basic standards of educational proficiency applicable to secondary school students.

I am accompanied today by Mr. Bud Blakey, a Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislation in HEW, and Ms. Connie Stewart, Director of Policy Communication in my office.

As I understand the bill before us, it would require, as a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, each State to submit a plan that would establish and implement basic standards of educational proficiency.

These standards would extend at a minimum, to the skills of reading, writing and mathematics. The standards would be assessed by a statewide proficiency examination, the successful completion of which would be a requirement for the high school graduation of any students in the States. Financial assistance would be made available from the Federal Government to help the States develop their programs.

Also, a national commission would be created, and that commission would set up national standards for educational proficiency in the secondary schools. Each State's plan would be required to conform with national standards established by the commission, and if they did not meet the national commission's standards, the basic standards would go into effect. If the State refused to adopt those national standards, then funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act would not be available.

I know that the quality of education in the schools may have declined over the last 10 or 15 years, and we need to take some drastic steps to deal with this.

Last month, I appeared with Adm. Hyman Rickover before Senator Pell's Education Subcommittee of the Committee on Human Resources.

Since my appearance before Senator Pell's subcommittee, I have created special task forces within the Education Division in HEW to work on the problem of basic skills and quality education, and the testing issue, and to determine an appropriate proposal for the Federal role in this regard.

These task forces are still at work, and they will be providing extensive reports for our use in developing administrative and administration policies on this issue. So I believe that we are in the early stages of a significant national dialog on these issues. This dialog may well reveal the need for a Federal intervention and a Federal role to buttress the quality of our Nation's schools. But we are not prepared today to state exactly what the appropriate Federal response should be. We will be able to say that soon.

We do know that there is reason for concern. We are all concerned. There is a great deal of evidence suggesting the decline in the standards of student accomplishment. There are confirmed reports of grade inflation and standardized test score decline. There are complaints from the business community and from the military of the incompetence in the basic skills among many of their recruits. There have been lawsuits brought against the schools alleging incompetence, irresponsibility, and malpractice.

More indirectly, there is widespread concern about vandalism of schools, apparently increasing rates of drug and alcohol usage, about teenage suicide and pregnancy. Most recently, we have seen unemployment rising steeply for most young people, especially for black teenagers, and especially for young blacks in the cities. The Labor Department analyses suggest that inadequate levels of education contribute to the limited employability of many of these would-be workers.

Yes, something is wrong, but the very catalog of problems tells us that there is neither a single cause, nor a single remedy. There are many more questions than answers.

A case in point is the recently publish report of the College Entrance Examination Board, "On Further Examination." This report does testify to the decline in the scores of college admission tests over the last 13 years, and attempts to discover and analyze the reasons for the decline.

From 1963 to 1970, the report tells us much of the decline was due to a change in the composition of the test takers. That is, there were more minorities and more women taking the test than had previously been the case. It would seem to me that one inference that could be drawn from that finding is that we have started to succeed in providing expanded educational opportunities, but we have not provided sufficient preparatory education to see to it that these new test takers can take advantage of their new educational chances. So we have progress in the mere fact that they are taking these tests. This is progress, of a sort, but this is not fulfillment.

Since 1970, however, in another one of the findings, the College board study says that the greater proportion of the test score decline is not attributable to a changing population of test takers. Working with admittedly incomplete information, the College Board speculates that the cause may lie in some factors like changes in curriculum, declines in educational standards, or perhaps television or changing family structures, declining student motivation, or simply what they call "a decade of distraction."

If all of these are factors in the decline, we have to say: What can the schools do which will be sufficient to solve the problems—problems of family decline, family structure, and television? Is it a burden to be borne by the schools?

To make matters more complicated, there are some other tests, nationally standardized, which show that there has not been a decline in achievement among students. For example, the National Assessment of Educational Progress scores for consumer mathematics and reading indicates that there has not been a decline in the earlier school grades.

Also the Army general qualifications test gives us the same kind of evidence. We have these conflicting matters in evidence, which means again, that the nature of the problem is not entirely clear. We know that there is a problem, but the nature of the problem is unclear. Is it a failure to effectuate equal opportunity policies? Is it simply an historical aberration that will soon subside and let the schools and their students get back on an even keel?

Or is it a fundamental problem of educational objectives and performance that will get worse if we do not decide to make it better?

We are trying with our task forces to achieve a greater clarity and consensus on these issues before we proceed to drastic national policy.

We think that the bill before us for the development of national standards of basic educational proficiency raises a number of problems and major issues.

First, the educational needs of students, and students in different localities, States, and regions of this country, vary. Each of our thousands of local school boards decides which needs deserve the most attention in their locale. This is part of our tradition. This is a very significant part of our history.

There is no settled view among the people in the States on whether or not a significant set of common needs and standards should or could be devised.

A number of States have been moving on this issue; they report great difficulty in developing statewide standards, because people cannot agree every time on what ought to be required or assessed.

The people in the localities agree that there is a problem. They agree at a general level, a philosophical level, about what they want to test, and what they are interested in students learning. But when you talk about objective measures of what is to be learned in reading, writing, and arithmetic, you get a lot of disagreement.

Moreover, even if a decision is reached about areas of required competence, the problem remains of deciding just how well a person must perform to be judged minimally competent.

Policymakers in some localities may wish to peg minimum competencies relatively high, to encourage improvement and competition among schools, or they may wish to peg it relatively low, to insure every student a realistic chance of success. They may also need to adjust acceptable competency levels over time as social contexts and the population's average skill level change.

In addition to this issue of what to test, the most difficult problem may be that of providing educational programs that will improve student performance to meet the new standards. Once the standards are set, what do we do about providing new programs that will improve student performance to meet these standards?

Even though there are proven methods for improving the performance of individuals on various measures of educational achievement, it is typically difficult to implement much of this new knowledge in the schools, because of costs, constraints, staff capacities, and the resistence of both parents and teachers to certain innovation.

Additionally, these paths about improved performance, found in research projects, are neither widely known nor easy to replicate, and this is especially the case in the upper secondary grades.

We have to ask ourselves, what will become of schools or students who do not attain minimum standards? As a matter of fact, we do not even provide sufficient financial support at the Federal level to provide compensatory education beyond grade 6 in any of our schools.

So what will become of students or schools that do not attain minimum standards? Minimum standards must be accompanied by resources to help students and educators measure up to them, otherwise they become barriers that will reinforce existing inequities in the rewards of schooling.

The States have been very active in the standard-setting arena in recent years. Forty-two of the fifty States have begun to consider or have adopted statewide minimum competency standards. None of these programs have been in existence long enough for us to assess their effectiveness and their pitfalls.

I believe that these State programs may be most valuable in stimulating the systematic consideration of educational goals and priorities. They can, in their accompanying testing programs, provide significant information to help parents, policymakers and educators assess basic educational progress.

The State-level momentum is going, and even though it is decidedly of an experimental character, it would lead us to say that we would prefer Federal action to help the States, at this point. We would prefer the Federal Government's role to be to help the States establish standards and carry out their traditional constitutional responsibilities for education in ways that will meet their particular educational needs.

Through the agencies of HEW, the Federal Government could provide considerable help. States and localities are developing ingenious new programs to enhance their students' achievements—individualized educational plants, teacher-parent contracts, and many others. These are all innovations that the States have initiated.

The Federal education agencies could identify the most effective of these programs, and provide information about them and supportive technical assistance to other schools that are searching for solutions to similar problems.

The Federal Government might also help States to develop their own standards of educational proficiency, and to choose appropriate tests. On occasion it might also be useful for the Federal Government to develop new or improved tests to meet the developing needs of States and localities.

The Federal Government would be helping the States to choose and develop appropriate tests, and by providing technical assistance for some of their local problems as they set standards and as they implement these programs.

We believe that a more direct Federal intervention carrying mandatory requirements would produce inflexible and inappropriate standards and it may lead to an undesirable conformity of curricula, as States and localities seek safe and assured ways to meet the national mandate.

In this testimony, I have concentrated upon the central issues of problem definition and the development of national educational standards. I would mention two other specific effects of H.R. 6088 that would prove troublesome as we proceed.

First, the proposed National Commission, which some have likened to a national school board, would further increase the regulatory burden on both the Federal Government and the States, at a time when the States complain bitterly about the paperwork required by Federal law.

Second, we do not believe that the threat of withholding Federal education assistance is likely to be an effective means of encouraging States to adopt basic standards of educational proficiency, especially in light of the traditional control the States have reserved for themselves over the determination of educational curriculum and standards.

As we move forward with our discussion of these issues, I hope that we will keep two considerations in mind. First, the primary requirement is that we provide national leadership and secure State and local cooperation in an effort to assure that each child acquires the basic competencies required to to become a capable adult and a contributing citizen. As we do this, issues of accountability and testing are important, but they are not the dominant issues. The dominant issues are to see to it that each child has basic skills and receives the quality education that he or she deserves, that there will be diligent instruction and more learning for each school child. Testing is only part of the issue.

This leads to a final, and somewhat paradoxical, consideration. Reforms and improvements in American education have not ceased. Most elementary and secondary schools struggle every day to adopt improved practices, and most of them would testify that today's curricula and classroom practices are more intelligent and appropriate for our children than those of any mythical "gold age."

The challenge we face as a Nation is not to wring our hands together and parcel out the blame but rather to determine how all of us, in partnership with the States, can assure that our children will receive the best education possible.

I look forward to returning to Congress with considered recommendations for action on this important aspect of national educational policy.

Thank you very much.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you, Dr. Berry, for your very fine and substantive statement. Would you remain with us while we hear from the other members of the panel?

Dr. BERRY. I will be happy to.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Berry follows:]

STATEMENT BY
DR. MARY F. BERRY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION
EDUCATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SEPTEMBER 15, 1977

Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon H.R. 6088, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require State Educational Agencies to establish basic standards of educational proficiency applicable to secondary school students.

H.R. 6088 would require that, as a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, each State would submit a plan that would establish and implement basic standards of educational proficiency. These standards would extend at a minimum, to the skills of reading, writing and mathematics. The standards would be assessed by a state-wide proficiency examination, the successful completion of which would be a requirement for the high school graduation of any student in the States. Federal financial assistance would be available to help States develop their programs. Further, a National Commission would be created to set up national standards for educational proficiency in the secondary schools. Each State's plan would be required to conform with national standards established by the Commission. If any State's plan did not meet Commission standards, the basic standards established by the Commission would be placed in effect in that State. If the State refused to adopt the standard, it could no longer receive funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

H.R. 6088 reflects a growing concern in the nation that the quality of our public schools may have declined over the past 10 to 15 years, and the growing conviction that some drastic steps may be called for to reverse this decline. Last month, I appeared with Admiral Hyman Rickover before Senator Pell's Education Subcommittee of the Committee on Human Resources to discuss similar concerns. Since then, within the Education Division, we have created special task forces to review the evidence concerning standards of quality in our schools, and to determine the implications of this evidence with respect to Federal education policy. These task forces will work throughout the fall to furnish extensive reports for our use. I believe that we are in the early stages of a significant national dialogue on these issues -- a dialogue which may well reveal the need for important steps at the Federal level, to buttress the basic quality of our nation's schools. But we are not yet prepared to specify exactly what the appropriate Federal response should be.

Certainly there is reason for concern. There is much evidence before us suggesting a decline in the standards of student accomplishment. There are confirmed reports of grade inflation and standardized test score decline, as well as recurring complaints from the business community and the military of incompetence in the basic skills among many of their recruits. Lawsuits have been brought against the schools alleging incompetence, irresponsibility and malpractice. More indirectly, there is widespread public concern about vandalism of schools, apparently increasing rates of drug and alcohol usage, teenage suicide and pregnancy. Most recently we have seen unemployment rising steeply for blacks, especially young blacks in the cities; and Labor Department analyses suggest that inadequate levels of education contribute to the limited employability of many of these would-be workers. Yes, something is wrong, but the very catalog of problems tells us that there is neither a single cause, nor a single remedy. In my mind there are more questions than answers.

A case in point is the recently published Report of the College Entrance Examination Board, On Further Examination. As you know, the Report testifies to the decline in the scores of college admission tests over the past 13 years, and attempts to discover and analyze the reasons for the decline. From 1963 to 1970, the Report tells us much of the decline was due to a change in the composition of the students taking the test. That is, more minorities and women were included in the test taking population than had previously been the case. Thus, it seems to me, the decline means that we have begun to succeed in providing expanded educational opportunities; but for large numbers of young Americans, we have not yet provided a sufficient preparatory education to enable them to take advantage of their new educational chances. This is progress, of a sort, but not fulfillment.

Since 1970, however, the College Board study reports the greater portion of the test score decline is not attributable to a changing population of test takers. Working with admittedly incomplete information, the College Board's study speculates that the cause may lie in some changes in curriculum and declines in educational standards or in such broad social factors as television, changing family structures, declining student motivation or simply "a decade of distractions." If all these are true, what can the schools do which will be sufficient to solve the problems?

To make matters more complicated, there are other nationally standardized tests where there has not been a decline in achievement levels. These include several tests of performance in the earlier school grades, recent National Assessment scores for consumer mathematics and reading, and the Army General Qualifications Test.

Thus, the evidence at hand leaves the nature of the problem unclear. Is it a failure to effectuate equal opportunity policies? Is it simply an historical aberration that will soon subside and let the schools and their students get back on an even keel? Or is it a fundamental problem of educational objectives and performance that will get worse if we do not decide to make it better? Let us achieve some clarity and consensus on these issues before we proceed to drastic national solutions.

A proposal such as H.R. 6088 for the development of national standards of basic educational proficiency raises a number of major issues:

First, the educational needs of individual students and of students in different localities, States, and regions vary; and each of our thousands of local school boards decides which needs deserve the most attention in its locale. There is no settled view on whether or not a significant set of common needs and standards could or should be devised. States report great difficulty in developing State-wide standards because people cannot agree on just what ought to be required or assessed. They may agree at a general or philosophical level, but there is disagreement on specific objectives and measures. This is true even in the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Moreover, even if a decision is reached about areas of required competence, the problem remains of deciding just how well a person must perform to be judged minimally competent. Policy-makers may wish to peg minimum competencies relatively high (to encourage improvement and competition among schools) or relatively low (to insure every student a realistic chance of success). They may also need to adjust acceptable competency levels over time as social contexts and the population's average skill level change.

The most difficult problem may be that of providing educational programs that will improve student performance to meet new competency standards. Even though there are proven methods for improving the performance of individuals on various measures of educational achievements, it is typically difficult to implement much of this knowledge in the schools, because of costs, constraints, staff capacities, and the resistence of both parents and teachers to some potential avenues of improvement. Additionally, these paths about improved performance, found in research projects or exemplary sites, are neither widely known nor easy to replicate, and this is especially the case in the upper secondary grades. What will become of schools or students who do not attain minimum standards? Minimum standards must be accompanied by resources to help students and educators measure up to them; otherwise they become barriers that will reinforce existing inequities in the rewards of schooling.

The States have been very active in the standard-setting arena in recent years. Forty-two of the fifty have begun to consider or have adopted State-wide minimum competency standards. Unfortunately, these programs are too new for the Education Division to assess their effectiveness and their pitfalls. I believe that these State programs may be most valuable in stimulating the systematic consideration of educational goals and priorities; and they can, in their accompanying testing programs, provide significant information to help parents, policy-makers and educators assess basic educational progress. With this State-level momentum and its decidedly experimental character, our strong initial preference for Federal action is to help the States establish standards and carry out their traditional constitutional responsibilities for education in ways that will meet their particular educational needs. Through the Office of Education and the National Institute of Education, the Federal government could provide considerable help: States and localities are developing ingenious new programs to enhance their students' achievements -- individualized educational plans, teacher-parent contracts and many others. The Federal education agencies could identify the most effective of these programs, and provide information about them and supportive technical assistance to other schools that are searching for solutions to similar problems. The Federal government might also help States to develop their own standards of educational proficiency, and to choose appropriate tests. On occasion it might also be useful for the Federal government to develop new or improved tests to meet the developing needs of States and localities. A more direct Federal intervention carrying mandatory requirements may produce inflexible and inappropriate standards and it may lead to an undesirable conformity of curricula, as States and localities seek safe and assured ways to meet the national mandate.

In this testimony, I have concentrated upon the central issues of problem definition and the development of national educational standards. I would only mention two of the specific effects of H.R. 6088 that would prove troublesome as we proceed. First, the proposed National Commission would further increase the regulatory burden on both the Federal Government and the States, at a time when the States already complain bitterly about the "paperwork" required by Federal law. Second, we do not believe that the threat of withholding Federal education assistance is likely to be an effective means of encouraging States to adopt basic standards of educational proficiency, especially in light of the traditional control the States have reserved for themselves over the determination of educational curriculum and standards.

As we move forward with our discussion of these issues I hope that we will keep two considerations in the forefront. First, the primary requirement is that we provide national leadership and secure State and local cooperation in an effort to assure that each child acquires the basic competencies required to become a capable adult and a contributing citizen. In this quest, issues of accountability and testing will be important but hopefully not dominant. More effective programs, with diligent instruction and eager learning, must come first.

And this leads to a final, somewhat paradoxical, consideration: reforms and improvements in American education have not ceased. Most elementary and secondary schools struggle continually to adopt improved practices and most would testify that today's curricula and classroom practice are more intelligent and appropriate for our children than those of any mythical "golden age." The challenge we face as a nation is not to wring our hands together and parcel out blame, but rather, to determine how, in partnership with the States, we can assure that our children will receive the best education possible.

I look forward to returning to Congress with considered recommendations for action in this important aspect of national educational policy.

Mr. **Mottl.** Next we will hear from Mr. Andrisek, superintendent of Berea City Schools in the Greater Cleveland Area.

Again, Mr. Andrisek, we want to compliment you on pioneering the first competency testing program in the State of Ohio.

Mr. Andrisek. you may proceed with your testimony, read it or summarize it. All of your statements will be admitted in the record without objection.

There being no objection, they will be admitted in the record in toto.

STATEMENT OF JOHN R. ANDRISEK, SUPERINTENDENT, BEREA CITY SCHOOLS

Mr. **Andrisek.** Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I am pleased and honored to have this opportunity to appear before the subcommittee this morning to discuss the efforts we are making in the Berea City School District to insure that all of our graduates have the minimum skills necessary to function in the adult world.

As part of this testimony, I am including the "Summary Report of the Competencies Commission," which was received and approved by the board of education on June 15, 1977. I believe that you all have a copy of it. This report explains in some detail the plans and programs that we will be carrying out in the months and years ahead.

I will not go into every page of this report this morning. The competencies commission was formed as the result of an August 1975 task force report written by a committee of parents, students and staff members. The report, entitled "Toward a Community of Experiences: Report of the Task Force to Study the Attitudes, Values, and Behaviors of High School Age Students," asked the board of education to increase minimum graduation requirements.

The group found that while most of the students in the Berea School System compared favorably with students in other school systems on a variety of standardized performance tests, there were students in the high schools whose basic skills in reading and mathematics were below an acceptable level.

In relation to some of the previous testimony, the declining test scores that all of us are concerned about have not hit so hard in Berea, which we are happy about, but we are still concerned.

This committee recommended that the board adopt the concept that every student be able to demonstrate a mastery of minimum life survival skills in order to graduate. Members asked that a new educational commission be established to determine the minimal skills and develop a plan to insure that all graduates achieve these skills.

After nearly 2 years of study and work, the commission presented its recommendations in June 1977, and I would like to give you a summary of those recommendations, and I will make this very brief.

A. Assess the degree of mastery by each student of specific skills in communication, computation, and knowledge areas, such as health, consumer economics, occupational knowledge, community resources and government or law by:

1. Administering the Berea City School District High School reading and mathematics proficiency examination, this is an instrument that we have worked and developed locally in conjunction with the National Testing Agency, specifically designed for our programs and

our children. This will be administered to all eighth grade students in September of 1977. Just as an aside, these were administered on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week.

2. We would administer the high school survey adult performance level test to all 10th grade students in November of 1977.

3. Administer the adult performance level test to all 11th grade students in November of 1977. I am making a distinction here, the performance level test is the short version.

All of these tools, initially, are for diagnostic purposes. They are, in fact, to help us identify those students whose skills and knowledge are not sufficient to function in adult life, and in time so that we can provide the instructional resources and support so that they can become competent.

The second recommendation was to provide instructional assistance to all students who are not able to perform at the prescribed level on the instruments indicated above.

The third recommendation is to establish a committee to study the feasibility of developing multiple diplomas.

The fourth recommendation requires that students graduating in the 1979–80 school year to be able to score at the 70-percent proficiency level on the adult performance level test in addition to completing 17 units of credit required by the State of Ohio.

The fifth and final recommendation is to communicate the plan and specific recommendations of this program to the entire school community.

To the casual observer, it may appear that the Berea School District is simply establishing new hurdles or obstacles for students to negotiate. Nothing could be further from the truth. The real heart of this program is the instructional assistance the schools will provide to those students whose skills are below the minimum standards.

In the final analysis, we expect only those young people who refuse to learn or those with restricted mental ability to fail to meet the 70-percentile proficiency level on the APL test. For the latter group of youngsters, that is the children who have had restrictions in their mental ability, special programs will be provided just as they are today.

Now this is a very brief summary of what our school district is doing and will be doing in the future to guarantee that its graduates have the minimal skills to survive in adult life. Obviously, our plans and programs are fairly consistent with the concept presented in H.R. 6088.

Therefore, I personally support this concept. However, I have some very real concerns about additional Federal intervention and mandates on local school districts. My own experience is that the Federal requirements are usually followed by a sea of paperwork, little positive improvement in the learning of children, and insufficient dollars to carry out the mandates.

I feel the concept of insuring that all high school graduates have certain minimum skills should be fostered and encouraged, but I am not convinced that what we are doing in Berea would be applicable to every school system or that the Federal Government has the collective wisdom to make regulations which are in the best interests of all the children of this country.

The local school board is, in my judgment, best able to make decisions most appropriate to the needs of the children and the community they serve. I would like to add also that I don't believe that this can be seen as a panacea for all problems of education. I think that this is one of the pitfalls that we tend to fall into in the field of education, that is to look at every attempt to solve a problem as a panacea for all the problems.

I think that this is just one attempt which may, and hopefully will, help children go out of public education and into the public world better able to cope with the world that they are going to work in and move in. We will know more about this 3 or 4 years from now.

I appreciate this opportunity to be here this morning, and I will be happy to answer any questions which members of the committee may have.

[Additional material submitted for the record follows:]

COMPETENCIES COMMISSION

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

BEREA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
June 15, 1977

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

June 15, 1977

TO: Dr. J. R. Andrisek, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Dean Kelly, Representing the Competencies Commission

RE: Summary Report of the Competencies Commission Including Recommendations

The Summary Report of the Competencies Commission Including Recommendations precedes a complete Report which will be forthcoming. Both the Summary Report and the complete Report represent nearly two years' work by a group of dedicated and interested parents, students and staff members. Acceptance and compliance with the recommendations included in this proposal will have great impact in the improvement of student skills throughout the school district.

The recommendations focus on six major goals which the Competencies Commission Members believe are of critical importance in improving the skills of students in our schools. They are:

- The identification of specific competencies and performance indicators which are necessary for individuals to master to become a coping adult.
- The development of a comprehensive assessment model designed to diagnose student needs in reading, mathematics and other functional skills beginning at grade eight and continuing through grade eleven.
- The expansion and refinement of a Minimum Competencies Assurance Program designed to provide increased assistance for students who have identified needs in the basic skills and functional competencies.
- The organization of a small Task Force, which would include some Competencies Commission Members, to study the feasibility of developing multiple or differential diplomas.
- The implementation of the competencies concept as a graduation requirement with the present tenth grade class (1977-1978) when they graduate in 1979-1980.
- The need to provide comprehensive information regarding the Competencies Concept to the total school community and the need to monitor the successes and problems related to the implementation of the competencies concept.

Accomplishing these goals will require time, talent, and effort by all segments of the school community. However, much has been done and many improvement activities are currently being planned to improve student skills further.

Thus, on behalf of the Competencies Commission, I enthusiastically support these proposals and recommend that they be approved by the Board of Education for as rapid implementation as feasible.

I further recommend that the Board of Education pass a resolution of appreciation to those individuals who have worked on the Competencies Commission.

DK/rw

ROSTER OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

Name	Role	Area
Miss Lori Rae Adams	Student	Midpark
Dr. J. R. Andrisek, Ex Officio	Superintendent	Berea City Schools
*Mr. Jeff Arndt	Student	Midpark
Mr. Steven Arndt	Student	Midpark
Miss Vicki Balzer	Teacher, English	Midpark
Mr. Obie Bender	Parent	Berea
Mr. Bill Bourjaily	Teacher, Mathematics	MHJHS
Miss Gail Bozic	Guidance	Ford
*Mr. Bob Carroll	Teacher, Social Science	Roehm
Mr. John Evans	Principal	Gallaher
Miss Louise Gacek	Student	Midpark
*Mr. Stuart Gay	Student	Berea
Mrs. Jan Glozer	Parent	Berea
Mr. Jim Harmon	Teacher, Mathematics	Berea
Mrs. Betty Hess	Parent	Midpark
Miss Nancy Host	Student	Berea
Mr. Dick Hurley	Principal	Berea
Mr. Tom Julius	Student	Midpark
Mr. Kurt Keesy	Student	Berea
Mr. Tom Kellums	Parent	Midpark
*Dr. Dean Kelly	Assistant Superintendent	Berea City Schools
Mrs. Emily Lucas	Parent	Midpark
Mr. Ernest Mason	Teacher, Mathematics	Berea
*Mr. David Minich	Assistant Principal	Berea
Mr. Tim Monahan	Teacher, Special Education	Berea
Mr. Lawrence Morton	Parent	Berea
Miss Jenny Oakley	Student	Berea
Miss Carol Obloy	Student	Midpark
Mrs. Catherine Oliverio	Parent	Berea
Mr. John Otterson	Student	Berea
Mrs. Helen Pugliese	Teacher, Foreign Language	Berea
Miss Lisa Sarris	Student	Berea
Mr. Joe Savino	Parent	Berea
Miss Jean Schmittau	Teacher, Mathematics	Midpark
*Mrs. Maxine Slone	Parent	Midpark
Mrs. Helen Somerville	Teacher, English	Berea
Mrs. Nancy Tereshko Patterson	Teacher, Science	Midpark
Mrs. Nadean Thumm	Parent	Midpark
Miss Ruth Uveges	Student	Berea
Mr. John Wayland	Student	Berea
*Mr. Jim Wilson	Parent	Berea
*Mr. Paul Winkel	Assistant Principal	Midpark
Mrs. Verda Winter	Teacher, Foreign Language	Midpark
Mr. Matt Witt	Student	Midpark

Steering Committee Members

THE SETTING: BACKGROUND

In August, 1975, the Berea City School District published a report entitled, *Toward a Community of Experiences: Report of the Task Force to Study the Attitudes, Values and Behaviors of High School Age Students.* This Task Force included students, members of the community, parents, teachers, administrators, and board of education members. The report focused on three major goals which Task Force Members believed are fundamental for the improvement of the climate and educational programs of the Berea High School and Midpark High School. They are:

- Improve the human relationships in the schools
- Utilize student time more effectively
- Improve student skills

The Superintendent of Schools indicated to Board of Education Members in his letter of transmittial regarding the contents of the Report that accomplishing these goals will take time and a great deal of effort by all facets of the school community. He also indicated that action steps had been taken at both high schools to improve human relationships and to utilize student time more effectively. However, he further indicated that the proposal in the Report which can have the greatest impact in the high schools and the entire school district is the proposal related to improving student skills. Basically, this section of the Report recommends that in order to graduate from high school, a student must not only accumulate 17 credits of acceptable course work and fulfill the attendance requirements; but, he must also demonstrate a prescribed level of competency in certain areas, such as: reading, writing, mathematics, human relations, and relevant content subjects which relate directly to productive adulthood.

More specifically, Task Force Members made three basic recommendations related to the improvement of student skills. They are as follows:

1. The Berea City School District should continue to dedicate itself to raising the students' level of competency in the basic survival skills such as reading, English, mathematics, problem-solving, human relations, and other appropriate areas. The Superintendent of Schools should request that the Board of Education adopt the concept that certain skill competencies should be established that every student, except possibly some handicapped students, must master in order to receive a high school diploma.
2. In order that this policy may be implemented it is recommended that the Board of Education direct the Superintendent to establish a commission of the professional staff, parents, and students to determine the required skill competencies and describe them in terms of the behavior a student would have to demonstrate to show mastery. This task should be completed so that it can be implemented for tenth-grade students in the fall of 1976. The fundamental responsibility for the students' mastering these skills rests with the faculty of the school system. Therefore, the professional staff should reexamine the allocation of its resources in order to provide the students sufficient supportive and instructional help so the students can master the skills. This reexamination of the resources should be carried on in the light of two factors: (1) students have time available to learn and master the skills; (2) time spent on the learning task is critical to the rate of learning and mastery.
3. The required skill competencies be continually reviewed to determine whether they are appropriate and sufficiently demanding in order to encourage the students continuously to upgrade their learning.

As a result of these recommendations, the Superintendent of Schools, directed the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction to organize a Competencies Commission of parents, students, and professional staff members to study ways and means to implement the policy changes described in the three Task Force Recommendations listed herein.

COMPETENCIES COMMISSION ORGANIZATION

Commission Members were nominated by school principals, and they were contacted in September of 1975. Each person who had been recommended as a Commission Member accepted membership on the Commission.

In order to operate effectively,an eight member Steering Committee was organized. The tasks of the Steering Committee included: developing agendas, organizing resources, contacting consultants, reviewing the research and literature, and synthesizing ideas and concepts developed by the Commission Membership.

In the initial organizational phases of the study, Commission Members identified the specific tasks of the Commission, discussed graduation and diploma requirements, and established product-goals for the Commission. These tasks, requirements and goals are outlined herein:

Tasks of the Commission:

- Identify and determine the "functional, coping, enabling and/or survival" competencies in reading, mathematics, problem-solving, human relations and other appropriate areas (consumer economics, community resources, health, occupational knowledge, government and law) which are necessary and essential for all students--prior to graduation--for successful adult living.
- Describe these competencies in behavioral terms which can be measured.
- Indicate the levels of competency which all students must demonstrate to show mastery.

Graduation/Diploma Requirements:

- Should reflect the public's expectations for secondary education.
- Should be distinctive, representing an accomplishment, at least in part, which is independent of other factors.
- Should not necessarily mean that the holder is prepared for a job nor should it particularly signify that the holder is ready for college. Rather, the diploma should certify that the graduate possesses the baseline skills and knowledge essential to an effective adult citizenship.
- An ability to read, write and compute with specified proficiency.
- A minimum proficiency in the prioritized knowledge areas or those included in the Adult Performance Level Goals.
- Possess the skills to acquire the information necessary to be a citizen and a worker.
- The successful completion of a series of courses and/or planned experiences, some of which involve a group setting.

Product Goals:

As a result of the research, study and recommendations of the Commission, personnel in the schools will--

- Assure the public that graduating classes are gaining certain skills, knowledges and understandings.
- Establish a minimum meaning to the diploma.
- Develop a functional competency for each individual student prior to graduation in seven (7) skill areas (Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Computation, Problem-Solving and Interpersonal-Relations) related to the five (5) knowledge areas (Consumer Economics, Community Resources, Government and Law, Health and Occupational Knowledge).
- Assist individual students in obtaining the minimum skills, knowledges, and understandings which are perceived as being essential to survival in a producer-consumer society.

RESEARCH AND STUDY ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION

From 1975, when the Competencies Commission was organized, until June 15, 1977, Commission Members planned, organized and implemented over fifty-four meetings and study sessions including Commission, Steering Committees and Sub Committee Meetings. A listing of selected Commission Research and Study Activities and Tasks are outlined herein:

- Studied the High School Task Force Report intensively.
- Conducted six ERIC (Educational Resources Information Centers) searches for resources and materials.
- Contacted twenty-six State Department of Education Departments to ascertain what was being done in competency based education within specific states.
- Used the services of Educational Testing Service, American College Testing Service and Westinghouse Corporation extensively as resources for testing instruments.
- Contacted Educational Research Services to search for competency-based educational projects in progress and personnel working in the area.
- Utilized services of ERCA to identify resources and projects.
- Contacted and communicated with 88 different school systems throughout the country who has been identified as developing or implementing some type of competency-based education (60 in 1975-1976 and 28 in 1976-1977.)
- Used many on-site consultants (Dr. Nickse, Syracuse, New York; Dr. Henderson, Gary, Indiana, Mr. McCreary, NASA; Dr. MacNamee, Chicago, Illinois; Dr. Ronchi, Ohio State University; and Dr. Williams, Palm Beach, Florida).
- Identified functional or coping competencies in communication skills and computational skills along with performance indicators for these skills.
- Validated these skills (above) through feedback from local parent and civic groups.
- Transformed the communication and computation skills and performance indicators into specific test objectives and items.
- Developed the High School Reading Proficiency Test--Grades 9-12 and the Competency Test in Basic Mathematics from the communications skills, computation skills and problem-solving competencies and performance indicators designed by the Commission.
- Administered the HSRPT to all students in grades 9-12 (approximately 3700). Administered Competency Test in Basic Mathematics to a random sample (approximately 800 students). The analysis of these test scores provided further validation for the need to develop specific competency levels.

- Interpreted Reading Test data to all students and began implementing assurance programs to meet the needs of the students.
- Studied the Goals and Objectives of the Adult Performance Level Project in relationship to the competencies and performance indicators developed locally. Using the Commission's competencies and performance indicators as criteria; determined which APL Goals, Objectives and Performance Indicators would serve local needs as well as or better than those developed. Prioritized APL Knowledge and Skill Goals and Objectives in relationship to local needs.
- Utilized the services of Dr. Jerry Williams, Palm Beach County, Florida as a consultant to provide additional information regarding using the American College Testing Adult Performance Level Tests.
- Administered Adult Performance Level High School Survey Test to a random sample of tenth grade students from Berea High School and Midpark High School.
- Developed a status report, Review of Activities, in March of 1977 to determine understanding and acceptance of the Commission's work by the Commission and by various sub-publics. This Review of Activities described the tasks of the Commission, the task which had been completed, the prioritized knowledge goals, criteria for graduation requirements, diploma requirements, product goals of the Commission, definitions of the terms being used by the Commission, overview of the objectives of the High School Reading Proficiency Examination, considerations in developing tentative recommendations with some examples, a sample of the APL Grid including skill area competencies and knowledge area competencies, and a "sample or example" of possible components of an assurance program.
- Developed Tentative and Preliminary Recommendations (March 2, 1977). This document was developed by the Steering Committee using the ideas and suggestions developed by the Commission.
- Distributed Recommendations to various parent and civic groups for reactions and suggestions. Presented fourth revision (May 4, 1977) to Commission for final reactions. The fifth revision represents the final recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMPETENCIES COMMISSION

Traditionally, the high school diploma has been awarded to students who have fulfilled attendance requirements and course requirements prescribed by the State of Ohio and the Berea City School District. The Competencies Commission recommends that these two features will continue as prerequisites for receiving a high school diploma. However, in addition to these requirements, the Competencies Commission recommends a third component of demonstrated performance be added. Through this competencies and performance component, requirements for graduation become, in part, standards for learning; they shape the outcomes of schooling. Whatever constitutes graduation requirements affects what students are taught. Compliance with the new standards should not be construed to encompass the total school experience. The development of functional or coping competencies is only one part of schooling. Schools should continue to offer broad experiences in the fine arts, humanities, the usual college preparatory programs and vocationally related programs, particularly for students who have demonstrated that they are proficient in basic skills. These competency and performance standards which are recommended represent only a minimum.

If schools are to accept the responsibility for productive youth, as it seems they must, then they have some considerable obligations to prepare and to ready the students for these functional or coping competencies. The following recommendations have been developed toward the purposes of sending youth with demonstrated competencies into adulthood as well as evaluating student readiness in functional or coping skills.

1 FINDINGS:

Data from the High School Task Force Report revealed that while an analysis of student skills in the Berea City School District compared favorably with other school districts in a variety of testing situations, there were students in high school whose basic skills in reading and mathematics were not at a sufficiently high level where the students could expect to be successful in much course work.

Data from the Student Attitude Survey show that students who feel most positive about their schooling are those who get good grades, plan to continue post secondary education, and participate in school activities. Success and positive feelings about school appear to be related to the congruency between the skills of students and the skills expected by the school.

Reading teachers in all secondary schools indicate that there are large numbers of students who read below the level necessary to comprehend the materials found in many of the textbooks.

Follow-up study of graduates indicate that many students who go on to college feel they need more experience in learning how to write effectively. A study conducted by the Curriculum Review Team--Mathematics and Written Communication in 1976-1977 confirm that graduates feel they need more experiences in written communication.

An analysis of the testing conducted under the auspices of the Competencies Commission in reading and mathematics during the 1977-1978 school year further validate the fact that some students have serious reading deficiencies. There were 148 students with serious reading problems, 258 students who will require specific assistance to improve their reading skills, and 511 students who will require some classroom assistance in reading from the 9th, 10th and 11th grades. Fewer students were identified as having mathematics problems.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO ASSESSING THE DEGREE OF MASTERY OF SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES IN THE COMMUNICATION SKILLS, THE COMPUTATION SKILLS AND THE KNOWLEDGE AREAS [HEALTH, CONSUMER ECONOMICS, OCCUPATIONAL KNOWLEDGE, COMMUNITY RESOURCES, AND GOVERNMENT AND LAW]. THUS, THIS RECOMMENDATION RELATES TO THE SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES [THE WHAT] ALONG WITH THE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR AND THE LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY [THE HOW WELL]

- Administer the High School Reading Proficiency Examination Berea City School District to all eighth grade students during September of 1977 to assess their competencies in reading. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency and as a level to identify students who require instructional assistance.
- Administer the High School Mathematics Proficiency Examination Berea City School District to all eighth grade students during late September 1977 to assess their competencies in mathematics. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency and as a level to identify students who require instructional assistance. (Reduce the testing load at the eighth grade level by scheduling the Career Maturity Inventory at the ninth grade level.)
- Administer the High School Survey Adult Performance Level Test to all tenth grade students to diagnose their knowledge level understanding and to assess their skill level performance in early November, 1977. Use these data along with national data to establish criterion levels of performance necessary for graduation. Compare data from this measurement instrument with the High School Reading and Mathematics Proficiency Test Data and Ohio Survey Test Data (Grade 8) to ascertain the predictive value of the OST at Grade 8 in relationship to knowledge and skill development. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency and as a level to identify students who require instructional assistance.
- Administer the Adult Performance Level Test to all eleventh grade students in November of 1977 to diagnose their knowledge level understanding and to assess their skill level performance. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency and as a level to identify students who require instructional assistance.*

RATIONALE:

The development of specific coping or functional skills can help individuals deal with the changing demands and pressures of schooling and society only if the individuals and those designated to assist him can diagnose specifically his needs so improvement areas can be identified. The testing instruments recommended by the Competencies Commission are diagnostic. They provide the individual and his teacher with a precise profile of his strengths and weaknesses.

The High School Reading Proficiency Examination provides data revealing the specific reading needs of each individual as does the High School Mathematics Proficiency Examination in mathematics.

The Adult Performance Level measurement instruments encompass five general content areas that collectively include most of the abilities judged to be critical to the daily life of successful, productive adults. The content areas are: Community Resources, Occupational Knowledge, Consumer Economics, Health, and Government and Law. Simultaneously, the tests measure the basic skills of reading, writing, computation and problem-solving that are deemed important for successful living.

Minimum competency is defined as a level of educational performance which predicts a reasonably good probability of a satisfactory, productive life. An analysis of the reading test scores, the mathematics test scores, and the Adult Performance Level Test scores conducted by the American College Testing Corporation indicates that the 70 per cent level is the critical point for competency, which is just slightly above the level achieved by the dependent groups in the national studies. Perhaps, the principal feature of the APL Tests is their generalization ability or external validity.

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FINDINGS:

The programs designed to accommodate students who demonstrate deficiencies in functional skills and content area knowledge in the secondary schools of the Berea City School District compare favorably with other school districts. However, existing prevention and remedial programs must be expanded and more clearly defined. Also, these improvement programs cannot exist in a vacuum; all instructors need to assist and reinforce skill development to afford students maximum growth and achievement.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS WHO DO NOT PERFORM AT THE PRESCRIBED CRITERION LEVELS ON THE READING ASSESSMENT, THE MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT, THE HIGH SCHOOL SURVEY APL TEST AND THE ADULT PERFORMANCE LEVEL TEST.

- **Expand and refine the present instructional activities which are designed to assist students improve their functional skills and knowledge into a more clearly defined Minimum Competencies Assurance Program. This program will relate directly to the improvement of student skills and knowledge areas which have been identified through diagnosis and analysis as needing improvement. Furthermore, this program will include: staff development activities which focus on instructional strategies designed to assist students improve in specific skills, precise teaching and learning materials which relate to improving specific areas, articulation and communication among all levels of the school district regarding successes and problems in skill improvement, and communication and counseling with parents and students.**
- **Recommend that the Superintendent assign one individual to be responsible for the Competencies Program. This would be in addition to his other responsibilities.**

RATIONALE:

The emphasis should focus on learning related to improving specifically diagnosed needs, not on vague ideas of discipline or endurance. Recent research indicates that prevention and remedial work in skill development and content area improvement can be effective when undertaken at the high school level as well as at the elementary level. However, at the deeper level is the students' self-concept. Each person searches for positive recognition of his worth and he comes to view himself as adequate in those areas where he received assurance of his competence or success. For a student to view himself in a positive way, he must be given many opportunities to be regarded. Improvement and mastery in functional skills and knowledge areas and its public recognition provide the necessary reassurance and reinforcement to help the student view himself as adequate."

3 FINDINGS:

Currently, the Berea City School District awards one type of diploma to all students who fulfill present graduation requirements. No specific distinctions are made for the wide range of student achievement. Regardless of the number of credits earned, the grades received in specific courses, advanced placement or honors classes, or other factors only one type of diploma is awarded.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO DEVELOPING DIFFERENTIAL OR MULTIPLE DIPLOMAS.

- **Recommend that a small task force composed of parents, students and educators study the feasibilty of developing multiple diplomas during the 1977-78 school year. Some members of the Competencies Commission should serve as a member of this taskforce.**

RATIONALE:

The addition of a competency level component which all students must demonstrate as a graduation requirement suggests that every student may not be successful. Thus, there may be a few students who are not able to fulfill this competency level component as a graduation requirement. Therefore, the feasibility--the advantages and disadvantages--of awarding multiple diplomas should be studied. Such considerations as the following could be examined: an academic or honors diploma, a vocational diploma, a regular diploma, or a certificate of attendance.

4 FINDINGS:

Efforts to establish new or different policies and procedures which are major in scope and have a major impact on the school as an institution, with the students, with the staff, and with the school community have often fallen short because insufficient time has been allocated for readiness, understanding and "tooling up." Likewise, an excessive time allocation prior to implementation can also reduce effectiveness and encourage procrastination. However, sufficient time will be required for coordination and integration among those who are involved in seeking solutions for improving student skills and content knowledge.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPETENCIES CONCEPT AS A REQUIREMENT FOR GRADUATION FOR ALL STUDENTS, EXCEPT THOSE WHO HAVE SPECIFIC HANDICAPS.

- **Implement the Competencies Concept as a requirement for graduation with the graduation of the 1977-78 Grade 10 Students when they graduate in the 1979-80 school year. Use the 70% proficiency level criterion to ascertain competency. Students who perform at the 70% proficiency level on the Adult Performance Level Test at Grade Eleven will have fulfilled the competencies requirement for graduation.***

RATIONALE:

There is technical and substantive excellence in identifying and remediating specific skill and knowledge area deficiencies among high school age students with the subsequent goal of skill improvement; but, the effectiveness of this task may be limited by an inadequate delivery mechanism. A workable delivery system should include these elements: Administrative Structure (The person(s) responsible for orchestrating the system), Communication Methods (The ways messages are communicated), Communication Influences (Those influences that help people learn), Feedback (Reactions, individual statements, reports), Reinforcement (How decisions are strengthened), Monitoring (Assessing progress), Norms (Formal and informal rules), Services (The programs or activities that help students improve their skills), and Behavior (What the individual student is able to do with his newly developed skills). Thus, one must be certain that the implementation schedule provides time for readiness, development of an adequate delivery system including staff development, and effective communication to the many sub-publics in the school community; yet, the schedule should not allow unnecessary delays or excessive procrastination.

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FINDINGS:

If one expects significant improvement in the improvement of student skills and content area knowledge over the long term, school district-wide procedures that encourage a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the competencies concept must be developed and implemented soon. All segments within the school community must understand and appreciate the rationale for this concept, the successes and problems related to the identification program and the assurance program, and the consequences if an individual student cannot or does not fulfill all of the graduation requirements.

RECOMMENDATION RELATED TO FEEDBACK AND PROGRESS RELATED TO THE COMPETENCIES CONCEPT TO MEMBERS OF THE COMPETENCIES COMMISSION AND OTHER GROUPS.

- **Since communication of the Competencies Concept is critical to success, it is recommended that:**
    - **The Competencies Commission meet twice each school year to review the status, problems and plans related to implementing the Competencies Concept.**
    - **School personnel be assigned to plan and design a specific communications plan related to all facets of the Competencies Program. All Commission Members emphasize the importance of communicating the status of the program to all students, teachers and parents. All methods and media need to be considered.**

RATIONALE:

With the definition and development of system-wide procedures that encourage a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the competencies concept and with influential social groups and organizations providing support and assistance in evaluating implementation results, it should be easier and more effective in providing effective remedial services to those who require such service. It is recognized that certain risks exist when specific monitoring plans are designed; however, the challenge is to develop and deliver programs that provide individual growth in skill development and content area knowledge which relates directly to independent and productive citizenship for the student.

*(*Data from the reading and mathematics tests and the High School Survey APL Test will be compared continuously to data from the Adult Performance Test to ascertain the predictive value of the reading, mathematics and High School Survey APL Test as one means of monitoring the effectiveness of the early competency testing.)*

APPENDICES

BASIC COMPETENCIES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS*

The Competencies Commission identified the functional, coping, enabling and/or survival competencies in the communication skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and in the computation skills. In addition, the Commission Members developed performance indicators for these competencies. At the same time the Commission Members were creating and developing specific competencies, performance indicators and criteria to evaluate them, they were searching the literature and research projects for other groups who were working on similar projects to avoid the problem of "reinventing the wheel." In this search, Commission Members discussed, among many others, the Adult Performance Project (APL). The central objectives of APL were to specify the competencies which are functional to the economic and educational success of an individual in today's society and to develop devices for assessing those competencies. Thus, the APL Project represented one which focused on the question, "Why are certain competencies important to productive adult living?" and it was national in scope. Furthermore, this project had considerable federal as well as foundation funding. Also, the American College Testing Corporation became interested in the APL Project and they became involved in producing high-quality measurement instruments which could provide national norms and reference groups for individuals who are tested. This factor is essential in today's highly mobile society. At this point, the Commission Members began an intensive study of the APL Goals and Objectives in order to ascertain their relationships between the tasks of the Commission and the earlier work accomplished by the Commission. This study revealed a high relationship between the tasks and needs of the Commission and some of the products of the APL Project and ACT Competency Tests. As a result of further study, the Commission developed a series of functional or coping competencies which are closely related to those developed in the APL Project.

These competencies or major objectives are organized into the general knowledge areas of Consumer Economics, Occupational Knowledge, Health, Government and Law, and Community Resources as well as the specific skill areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, computation, problem-solving and interpersonal relations. These competencies or major objectives represent specific requirements which the learner must master. They represent the fundamental building blocks for descriptions of the critical competencies which are required for functional or coping competency. Each major objective or competency, in turn, is described by a series of minor objectives followed by some "examples." Mastery of these objectives is manifested by the individual's ability to perform a group of tasks--to respond appropriately to specific situations which reflect the requirements of the objective.

The implications of this model becomes especially important when one attempts to translate these competencies into curriculum and training programs for students. When used for this purpose, the objectives should be considered as paradigms or general guidelines. They should not be interpreted as being engraved in stone, because it is the purpose that is the most important element for functional competency.

*(*Competencies and Objectives are used synonymously. The same is true for performance indicators and examples.)*

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 1. 1. The individual should develop a working vocabulary for these knowledge areas: Health, Government and Law, Community Resources, Occupational Knowledge and Consumer Economics. This means that the individual must be able to read, listen, write, speak, compute and solve problems at a literacy level which will enable him to function in our society. Specific objectives and examples are provided for this Major Objective 1 in the subsequent Major Objectives.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 2. **The individual should understand the effective use of money, money substitutes, and financial services.** This means that he or she should

Objective: A. Know how and why income and sales taxes are collected

Examples:

- —Sales tax as regressive
- —Computing specific sales tax
- —Filling out a 1040 form

Objective: B. Understand the relationship among various denominations of money and among various weights and measures

Examples:

- —Converting paper money to coins
- —Figuring out the square yardage for carpeting
- —Cutting a recipe in half

Objective: C. Know how to use various media of exchange

Examples:

- —Filling out a request for money order
- —Cashing a check
- —Using credit cards

Objective: D. Know the various types of banking services

Examples:

- —Opening a savings account
- —Balancing a check book
- —Requesting a loan
- —Trusts

Objective: E. Know how to select, purchase, and maintain insurance policies

Examples:

- —Determining insurance needs
- —Figuring out when insurance payments are due
- —Finding best insurance policy for particular needs

Objective: F. Know how to figure costs and change

Examples:

- —Cost per unit price
- —Totaling a bill
- —Adding service charges
- —Figuring change

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 3. **The individual should know how to apply for a job.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know how to use various sources to identify job opportunities.

Examples:

—Differences between types of sources (newspapers, agencies, word-of-mouth)
—Fees
—Which to use in particular circumstances

Objective: B. Know how to inquire about or apply for a job.

Examples:

—Writing a letter of inquiry about a job
—Asking for an application form
—Calling to set up an appointment or interview

Objective: C. Know how to fill out the various forms associated with employment.

Examples:

—What information to put on an application form
—What function a W-4 form serves
—A job evaluation form

Objective: D. Understand the compilation, construction, and importance of a resume or a description of previous jobs.

Examples:

—What to include in a resume
—How an employer uses a job history
—What information legally does not need to be reported
—Need for neatness and accuracy

Objective: E. Understand the importance of job interviews and know how to act accordingly.

Examples:

—Appropriate dress
—Promptness
—Need to anticipate obvious questions
—Relationship of interview to rest of hiring process

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 4. **The individual should know what personal habits promote good health.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know the basic principles of health maintenance.

Examples:

—The relation of cleanliness to health
—The relation of a regular exercise program to health
—Need for adequate sleep

Objective: B. Know the basic principles of nutrition.

Examples:

—Four basic food groups
—Special types of diets (low cholesterol, low salt, diabetic)
—Meal planning

Objective: C. Understand the relationship between drugs and health.

Examples:

—Immunization programs
—Side-effects of drugs (allergic reactions)
—Over-the-counter versus prescription drugs
—Alcohol
—Nicotine

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 5. **The individual should know how to plan family or individual budgets.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. What a budget is and how it should be used.

Examples:

—Advantages of making a budget
—Logical budget categories
—Using a budget to set realistic limits on spending

Objective: B. How to determine individual needs and resources.

Examples:

—Sources of income (salary, interest)
—Factors that determine need (family size, occupation)
—Setting priorities: needs versus luxuries or extras

Objective: C. How economic factors affect budgeting.

Examples:

—Inflation as a budget problem
—Seasonal employment and its effect on predictable income
—Using lists to prevent impulse shopping
—International trade

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 6. **The individual should understand how education, interests, and experience affect the kinds of employment one can or should pursue.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. Which educational and job experiences are required or recommended for specific occupational categories (or families) and how these requirements relate to the duties of the jobs in those categories.

Examples:

—What clerical jobs entail
—How much experience is required for technical jobs
—Understanding why social service jobs require special training

Objective: B. The minimum qualifications for specific jobs.

Examples:

—How much training it takes to be a secretary/stenographer
—What skills are required for librarians
—What legal job requirements are for bus drivers

Objective: C. How vocational testing and counseling can help individuals identify job interests and abilities.

Examples:

—Where to go for vocational testing
—What information the counselor needs to help the client's
—Understanding the relationship between ability and interest

Objective: D. What factors outside the individual might affect his or her job choices or interests.

Examples:

—Need for certain types of hours
—Location of facilities relative to home
—Job benefits such as pension, insurance, vacation

Objective: E. How to read and assess job descriptions.

Examples:

—Match between interests and job description
—Match between needs and job description

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 7. **The individual should know how to maintain a job.** This means that he or she should

Objective: A. Know the standards of behavior for various types of employment

Examples:

—Need to obey company rules about promptness, lunch hours, and so forth
—How to deal with problems with other employees
—Understanding the influence of attitude

Objective: B. Understand how and why employers make decisions about promotion and dismissal

Examples:

—Relationship between availability of jobs and opportunities for promotion
—Difference between lay-offs and firings
—Need for continuing education/growth

Objective: C. Know the legal restrictions that govern employers and employees

Examples:

—Federal regulations governing working conditions
—Contracts
—Labor unions and unionism

Objective: D. Understand the financial aspects of employment

Examples:

—Computing salaries
—Comparing benefits
—Calculating hours to figure amount of overtime
—Figuring out sick time

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 8. **The individual should know how and when to use various community services.** This means that he or she should know

Objective: A. Which agencies or departments provide various types of services

Examples:

—Services offered by police
—Services offered by fire department
—Services offered by post office
—Services offered by Humane Society

Objective: B. How to apply for or gain access to various types of community services

Examples:

—Where to write emergency numbers for easy access
—Using a fire call/alarm box
—Applying for welfare

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 9. **The individual should understand the relationship between individual citizens and the selection and maintenance of government.** This means that he or she should

Objective: A. Know about the electoral process and the individual's role in it

Examples:

—Voter registration
—Balloting
—Types of elections

Objective: B. Know about the Constitutional guarantees of individual rights

Examples:

- —Due process
- —Habeas corpus
- —Bill of Rights

Objective: C. Understand how the individual can try to influence her or his representatives

Examples:

- —Letter writing
- —Citizen's lobbies
- —Access to representatives' voting record
- —Referenda

Objective: D. Know what kinds of demands the government may and does make on individuals.

Examples:

- —Jury duty
- —Selective Service
- —Required legal documents (e.g., birth certificate)

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 10. **The individual should know where, when, and why to seek medical help.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Recognize obvious signs of illness and know which require professional attention.

Examples:

- —Normal temperature versus fever
- —Brief versus persistent cough
- —Symptoms of contagious diseases

Objective: B. Know the various types of medical facilities typically available in a community.

Examples:

- —Public Health Service
- —Hospital emergency rooms
- —Private clinics
- —Mental health clinics
- —Ambulances

Objective: C. Know how and why to follow medical instructions.

Examples:

- —Following dosage directions on a prescription label
- —Getting adequate exercise to restore health
- —Keeping a person who is ill in bed

Objective: D. Know how and why to communicate information about health problems to others.

Examples:

- —Calling a doctor to explain symptoms over the phone
- —Calling an employer to explain an absence
- —Filling out a Public Health Service form

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 11. The individual should understand marketing techniques and how these affect the individual, consumers in general, and the economy. This means that he or she should

Objective: A. Know various modes and techniques of advertising, including inappropriate or illegal techniques

Examples:

—Bait-and-switch techniques
—Price-fixing
—Appeals to emotions and peer pressure

Objective: B. Know where to go for help in solving consumer complaints or problems

Examples:

—Better Business Bureau
—Complaint department or manager within store or industry
—Boycotts

Objective: C. Know the relationship among cost, availability, and need

Examples:

—Regulating supply through tariffs
—Influencing demand through advertising (e.g., the Pet Rock phenomenon)
—Adjusting price because of lower supply (e.g., sugar "shortage" in 1974)

Objective: D. Understand the implications of consumption in light of finite world resources

Examples:

—Conservation of resources
—Recycling of resources
—Interdependence of nations

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 12. The individual should know how to apply the principles of consumer economics when buying, selling, or leasing goods or services. This means that he or she should

Objective: A. Know how to use catalogs, consumer guides, and other reference documents to select goods and services

Examples:

—Using a catalog to scrutinize available products
—Using a consumer guide to find the best buy
—Using advertisements to establish product capabilities

Objective: B. Understand the principles of comparison shopping and the relation of price to quality

Examples:

—Understanding the concepts of brand name versus house brand
—Effectively using size-cost comparisons
—Knowing which is best store to buy specific products

Objective: C. Know various packaging techniques and which are most cost-effective in terms of quality and storage

Examples:

—Size of package as a storage factor
—Shelf-life as a buying factor
—Comparing fresh, frozen, canned, and prepackaged foods for cost and nutritional value

Objective: D. Know how to place orders

Examples:

—Ordering in restaurants
—Tipping
—Placing mail or catalog orders

Objective: E. Know where to go to purchase particular goods and services

Examples:

- —Types of stores (cooperatives, department, retail, wholesale)
- —What is available where
- —Rental services

Objective: F. Know the laws that have been passed to protect consumers

Examples:

- —Listing of ingredients in particular order
- —Dating of particular types of consumer goods (prescriptions, dairy products)
- —Flammability regulations on drapes and cloth
- —Exit regulations for public establishments

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 13. **The individual should understand the economic factors involved in maintaining consumer goods.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know the basic procedures for the care and upkeep of personal possessions.

Examples:

- —Reading a care label on clothing
- —Knowing how to clean stains on carpets
- —Understanding the relationship between care and durability

Objective: B. Understand the relationship of price to the quality and the life of consumer goods

Examples:

- —Knowing that brand names usually cost more
- —Factors other than price that determine quality
- —Deciding when quality and durability should be sacrificed to price and ease of use

Objective: C. Understand the principles of crime prevention.

Examples:

- —How to protect a car against theft
- —How to list possessions for insurance purposes
- —What to do at the scene of a theft or break-in to help police solve it

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 14. **The individual should know when and how to use informational resources.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. Which agencies or facilities (e.g., library, television, radio, newspaper, bulletin board) provide various types of information

Examples:

- —Where to go for information about mailing a package
- —Types of information provided by state university extension services
- —Getting weather reports
- —Making maximum use of radio

Objective: B. How to gain access to the various agencies

Examples:

- —Getting permission to use facilities such as a bulletin board
- —Getting telephone information for a distant city
- —Filling out an application for a library card
- —Using the card catalog

Objective: C. The circumstances under which various types of information might be helpful

Examples:

- —Need for information when buying a house
- —Need for information about poisons
- —Need for information when doing a home-repair job

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 15. **The individual should know how to use transportation systems and services.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Know how to determine the appropriate mode of transportation.

Examples:

—Factors such as cost, time, accessibility and convenience
—Modes such as car, taxi, bus, train, plane, foot, bicycle

Objective: B. Know how to use transportation schedules.

Examples:

—Determining which bus to take to arrive at a certain time
—Figuring out arrival times
—Understanding the special exceptions noted on a schedule

Objective: C. Know how to calculate fares and other costs of transportation.

Examples:

—Calculating a plane fare
—Figuring gas mileage
—Using transfers to advantage

Objective: D. Know how to use road, city, and special transportation maps.

Examples:

—Finding the nearest bus stop on a city bus map
—Calculating distance using a road map
—Determining a route (navigating)

Objective: E. Know how to make reservations and other travel arrangements.

Examples:

—Making hotel reservations by phone
—Buying a commuter ticket
—Using a travel agency
—Understanding confirmations

Objective: F. Know how to drive safely and legally.

Examples:

—Knowing rules of the road (passing, speeding, etc.)
—Knowing how to drive in special weather conditions
—Reading and understanding road signs

Objective: G. Know how to apply for and obtain the various documents associated with travel.

Examples:

—License tests (written and behind-the-wheel)
—Having valid registration
—Using license plates
—Needing a passport

Objective: H. Understand how time zones and daylight saving time may affect travel plans.

Examples:

—How time zones affect long-distance phone calls when making reservations
—How time zones affect travel plans
—How daylight saving time affects work schedules of service workers in the travel industry

Objective: I. Understand how modern transportation causes public problems.

Examples:

—Relation of cars to air pollution
—Concept of carpooling
—Traffic jams and parking problems
—Advantages and disadvantages of mass transit

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 16. **The individual should know when and how to use recreational resources.** This means that he or she should know:

Objective: A. About the types of services offered by various facilities, both public and private, for recreation and entertainment.

Examples:

- —What types of activities are available or allowed in public parks
- —Where to go to see a movie or play
- —What types of museums or cultural activities are available in an area

Objective: B. How to schedule activities at or through the various facilities.

Examples:

- —Reading a theater schedule
- —Calling for movie information
- —Checking the newspaper for T.V. programs
- —Subscribing to a series (concert, movie, sports, etc.)

Objective: C. What types of equipment, or preparation, or previous experience might be required for participation in various activities.

Examples:

- —Licenses required for special recreational activities
- —Renting equipment such as bowling balls, canoes, bicycles, rowboats
- —Necessity of auditions for some activities
- —Making reservations for some facilities

MAJOR OBJECTIVE 17. **The individual should know how to deal with potential hazards and accidents.** This means that he or she should:

Objective: A. Recognize potential hazards.

Examples:

- —Improper storage of flammables
- —Medicines and cleaning fluids in reach of children
- —Frayed cords and other faulty equipment

Objective: B. Know where and when to apply basic safety measures.

Examples:

- —Use of fire extinguishers
- —Fire escape procedures
- —What to do when caught in a severe storm

Objective: C. Know when and how to apply first aid.

Examples:

- —Shock treatment
- —Treatment of dog bite or snake bite
- —Immobilizing broken bones

Objective: D. Know how and whom to ask for help in emergencies.

Examples:

- —Reporting a fire
- —Requesting an ambulance
- —Knowing where to get help if there is a street fight

SOME DEFINITIONS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COMMISSION'S WORK

COMPETENCY: AN ITEM IN THE SUB-SET OF THE TOTAL UNIVERSE OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGES WHICH:

- EVERY STUDENT MUST DEMONSTRATE A MASTERY AS A REQUIREMENT FOR GRADUATION.
- CAN BE DEMONSTRATED BY BEHAVIORS THAT ARE DIRECTLY MEASUREABLE.
- ARE BASED ON LEARNABLE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGES (RATHER THAN INNATE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS.)
- REPRESENT THE COMMUNITY'S (PATRONS, STAFF AND STUDENTS) EXPRESSION OF MINIMUM SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGES ESSENTIAL FOR BASIC SURVIVAL.
- CONTAIN REFERENT AND STATEMENT OF PRECISE REQUIRED SKILLS AND/OR KNOWLEDGES.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: A STATEMENT OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR WHICH:

- PROVIDES EVIDENCE ABOUT THE LEVEL OF COMPETENCY PERFORMANCES
- IS OBSERVABLE AND MEASURABLE.
- MEETS CRITERIA OF CONTENT VALIDITY, OBJECTIVITY AND APPROPRIATENESS.
- INCLUDES THE COMPONENTS OF ACTOR (WHO), ACTION (WHAT) AND SPECIAL CONDITIONS (IF ANY).

CRITERION REFERENCE: A STATEMENT OF PERFORMANCE WHICH:

- IS KEYED TO A SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR.
- IDENTIFIES THE MINIMAL LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE REQUIRED FOR SUCCESS ON A PERFORMANCE INDICATOR.

EXAMPLE: EXAMPLES OF A COMPETENCY, PERFORMANCE INDICATOR AND CRITERION REFERENCE FOLLOW:

- COMPETENCY: THE STUDENT PERFORMS THE ADDITION OPERATION WITH WHOLE NUMBERS.
- PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: GIVEN 25 MINUTES, THE STUDENT WILL COMPLETE A SCHOOL DISTRICT DEVELOPED ADDITION EXAMINATION WHICH CONSISTS OF 25 ADDITION EXERCISES OF VARIOUS DIFFICULTY.
- CRITERION REFERENCE: AT LEAST 20 (80%) ADDITION EXERCISES WILL BE COMPUTED CORRECTLY.

APL SKILLS AND CONTENT GRID

CONTENT AREAS→ SKILLS↓	COMMUNITY RESOURCES	OCCUPATIONAL KNOWLEDGE	CONSUMER ECONOMICS	HEALTH	GOVERNMENT AND LAW
IDENTIFICATION OF FACTS AND TERMS	Knowing what a time zone is	Knowing what skills are needed for clerical jobs	Knowing what "bait and switch" is	Knowing what the normal human temperature is	Knowing what the Bill of Rights says
READING	Reading a bus schedule	Reading a want ad	Reading a contract	Reading a prescription label	Reading a ballot
WRITING	Writing a letter to make hotel reservations	Filling out a W-4 Form	Filing a consumer complaint	Answering a medical questionnaire	Writing a letter to a legislator
COMPUTATION	Computing a plane fare	Computing overtime earnings	Finding the best buy	Computing a daily dosage	Computing a statute of limitations
PROBLEM SOLVING	Determining where to go for help with a problem	Deciding what to say to a bothersome co-worker	Deciding which of two decisions is better in economic terms	Deciding which meal is best, given a set of preconditions	Determining whether a given situation or action is legal

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
CONCERNING THE COMPETENCIES CONCEPT
BEREA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Competencies Commission was organized as a result of specific recommendations which were made by the High School Task Force. The Commission has studied the competencies concept for nearly two years. This study focused on six major goals which Commission Members believe are of critical importance in improving the skills of students in our schools. They are:

- The identification of specific competencies and performance indicators which are necessary for individuals to master to become a coping adult.
- The development of a comprehensive assessment model designed to diagnose student needs in reading, mathematics and other functional skills beginning at grade eight and continuing through grade eleven.
- The expansion and refinement of a Minimum Competencies Assurance Program designed to provide increased assistance for students who have identified needs in the basic skills and functional competencies.
- The organization of a small Task Force, which would include some Competencies Commission Members, to study the feasibility of developing multiple or differential diplomas.
- The implementation of the competencies concept as a graduation requirement with the present tenth grade class (1977-1978) when they graduate in 1979-1980.
- The need to provide comprehensive information regarding the Competencies Concept to the total school community and the need to monitor the successes and problems related to the implementation of the competencies concept.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Q. Why was the Competencies Commission formed?

   A. An analysis of student skills showed that while students in the Berea City School District compared favorably with other school systems under a variety of testing situations, there were students in high school whose basic skills in reading and mathematics were deficient to the extent that they were not able to perform successfully in the classroom.

2. Q. How will the Competencies Concept affect graduation requirements?

   A. In addition to fulfilling the course work (credits) and attendance requirements, each student must demonstrate functional competency in the basic skill areas (reading, listening, writing, computation and problem-solving) and five knowledge areas (health, community resources, consumer economics, government and law, and occupational knowledge.

3. Q. When will this Competencies Concept be implemented?

   A. This requirement will be in effect for the tenth grade class (1977-1978) of Berea High School and Midpark High School when they graduate in 1979-1980.

4. Q. What constitutes the minimum performance level?
   A. The minimum performance level has been determined through extensive research at the level slightly above the level achieved by "dependent citizens"--those citizens who are not productive nor are able to care for their needs.

5. Q. How were the criteria of the minimum performance levels established?
   A. The criteria established must reflect the value judgments of the community as expressed through the Competencies Commission study and research as reflected to the Superintendent and Board of Education Members.

6. Q. Will the minimal competency levels be reviewed?
   A. Yes, the performance of students will be carefully monitored and evaluated. As a result, any necessary changes will be recommended.

7. Q. How will this minimal competency be determined?
   A. After examining over 71 different types of measurement instruments or tests, it was decided to use the 200 item Adult Performance Level Test for eleventh grade students.

8. Q. How well do students need to perform on this Adult Performance Level Test?
   A. After extensive research and study, it has been determined that a student must score at the 70% proficiency level in order to meet the competencies requirement for graduation.

9. Q. Will students take other competencies tests prior to the eleventh grade?
   A. Yes. Students will take reading and mathematics tests at the eighth grade and a shortened version of the Adult Performance Level Test at the tenth grade.

10. Q. What are the purposes of these earlier tests?
    A. These tests are designed to diagnose the students' specific areas of strengths and weaknesses in the basic skills and knowledge areas so that he can be helped to improve those areas of weaknesses.

11. Q. Will the parents be informed of the results of these tests?
    A. Yes. Parents will be advised of these test scores and what they mean. Students will also be apprised.

12. Q. What does the Adult Performance Level Test measure?
    A. The Adult Performance Test measures five content areas and basic skills related to those attributes needed by productive adults. The content areas are: health, occupational knowledge, community resources, government and law, and consumer economics.

13. Q. Is the Adult Performance Level Test really an I.Q. Test?
    A. No. This is a test which requires one to apply accrued learning in "real life" situations.

14. Q. How do students feel about this Competencies Concept?
    A. We have no experience factor; however, students participated as members of the Competencies Commission. Furthermore, schools which have instituted this concept have found that students display better attitudes, work harder, study more and achieve better.

15. Q. Will this Competencies Concept tend to increase the drop-out rate?
A. The purpose of this program is to "screen students into school" and provide more appropriate learning experiences.

16. Q. Will students be able to take the Adult Performance Level Test at the eleventh grade more than once?
A. Yes. Again, the purpose is to help students. There are many different forms of the test.

17. Q. Will security for such tests be a problem?
A. Yes. Every precaution will need to be taken.

18. Q. Will the test affect what is taught in the schools?
A. Yes, and since the test measures those topics which are critical for individuals to learn, this can create a positive situation.

19. Q. What will the schools do to help students who "fail" the test?
A. The schools are developing a Minimum Competencies Assurance Program designed to provide students' help in specific areas of need.

20. Q. Why haven't the schools done this before?
A. The Berea City School District teachers have and are providing extensive assistance to all students. This program will place higher priority on the concept.

21. Q. Must all students pass the Adult Performance Level Test at the 70% proficiency level to graduate?
A. Yes. All students must pass the test except those who have specific handicaps.

22. Q. Will a student be able to graduate and receive a diploma if he does not "pass" the Adult Performance Level Test.
A. No. This represents a specific graduation requirement.

23. Q. Will multiple or differentiated diplomas be issued?
A. The Commission recommended that a task force be established to study the concepts and values of multiple diplomas.

24. Q. What plan will be made to accommodate transfer students?
A. After students transfer, they become Berea City School Students and will be treated like all students. However, students who transfer at the secondary level will be advised of this Competencies Concept requirement for graduation when they enroll.

25. Q. How will the school community be informed about the "why" and "what" regarding this Competencies Concept.
A. The Commission feels that all persons--students and parents--in the school community must be informed and understand this concept. The Commission has made a recommendation which places a high priority on community understanding and accepting this concept.

DK/rw
6/15/77

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you very much, Mr. Andrisek.

Before we proceed with Mrs. Warner, my distinguished colleague from Hawaii, Mr. Heftel, would like to proffer a question to the entire panel because he has to leave.

Mr. HEFTEL. Thank you very much, Mr. Mottl.

I thank all of you for participating in today's hearings. I am sorry that I will not have an opportunity to listen to Mrs. Warner and Mr. Beal. However, I will comment that I have read quickly through the testimony, and I did go to school in Arizona.

I have a concern which I think relates to Mr. Mottl's bill. I asked for a copy of "Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary" simply because we don't have 50 dictionaries, or 2,000 dictionaries as the case may be. For whatever reason, we have basically one single dictionary, and I think the reason is found in the necessity for us all to be able to communicate with each other, using a common language. In this case, English.

At a given point in Hawaii, the superintendent of education when asked about the lack of skills on the part of graduates from high school, made a statement which I think will long be remembered, which was that the diploma was not evidence of achievement, but attendance.

I think that this is not Federal intrusion. I don't care whether we are talking about a mandatory test, or a voluntary test, as I think you are now addressing yourselves to in the bill. I think that we are talking from some commonsense.

Is the diploma going to mean that by anybody's reasonable standards, we are going to expect our youth, for their benefit, to have some reasonable capacity to use the English language, and that we prefer in this single dictionary to make simple, arithmetic computations, and to read with some capacity to understand what is read?

I don't think that is a matter of testing, and I don't think that it is a matter of Federal intrusion. I think that it is just commonsense. I am being redundant in my questioning because I want to make sure that we are communicating on the same level.

How do we better achieve a standard for our young people in which they have the confidence, the potential employer has confidence, and society has confidence that after 12 years of education, the student has the reasonable ability to use the language, to do the very simple things that are necessary.

I don't know that you can give me short answers to long questions, but somewhere we have to address ourselves to that problem. I am satisfied that the testing system, voluntary or mandatory, Federal or State, is not the issue.

The issue is, are we going to tell the young people that you go to school to achieve certain skills for your own lives, and that you either leave school or stay in the same grade, or move to a different system, or a different technique of learning but that we are simply are not going to let you slide through, and come out unprepared, disappointed, disillusioned.

That, I think, is what generally has me disturbed. I am sure that it is the motivation for Mr. Mottl's bill, and I would like to hear one or more of you just quickly comment on what do we do about this overwhelming problem.

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Mr. MOTTL. I think that is an outstanding question. Why don't we go right down the line and start with Dr. Berry.

Dr. BERRY. Thank you very much, Mr. Heftel. I will be pleased to respond to that.

The general question is how do we create a situation where a student graduates from high school with these basic competencies?

I agree with you that testing is only one part of the answer. We must provide education tailored to each student that will compensate for whatever difficulty that student might have. When they graduate, we should be assured that students do have these competencies.

Schools will take responsibility for students, for all kinds of students, for educating them if we will provide the necessary kind of resources and support to the schools.

The schools will be held accountable, once we have provided the appropriate support, for graduating students who have these basic skills. I think that we can do all of those things; I don't think that it would require us in the Federal Government to enforce a set of rules that simply tells everybody what they should do, otherwise we would give them no money. Schools don't have enough money as it is.

I think that we need to provide the schools with additional financial support and technical assistance; and then the schools must be responsible for educating all of the students, whether they are slow learners, or minorities, or poor students.

The school systems must be responsible for keeping the students in the schools until they are able to read, write, and do arithmetic.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you, Dr. Berry. Superintendent Andrisek?

Mr. ANDRISEK. In response to your question, again I am going to speak directly about what we are attempting to do in our schools. I think that we are trying to deal directly with that issue so that, in fact when our young people leave high school, we can say with a degree of confidence: "Here are the areas in which they are proficient." We know that. They have accomplished 17 credits of course work, but in addition to that, here are the skills that they can perform at a minimal level.

I think that this is important, and I think that this is something that we have to look to in this counry. I agree completely with the concept that you are talking about. Also I agree with Dr. Berry that it seems to me that each school district needs to describe what it can do itself.

I am not sure that the level that we have set in our school district, as far as the minimum level, would be appropriate every place. We don't know at this point. I think that what is important is that when a youngster leaves high school, he or she knows what it is they can do, and the employer or the potential employer knows what he can expect from that student.

That would vary from place to place, but there would be a level of understanding of what the skills are. Those students who could not do this would not graduate, and we would have to provide other kinds of support. The probblem is what we would have to do with them.

Mr. MOTTL. Mrs. Warner, Superintendent of Public Instruction in Arizona.

Mrs. WARNER. Mr. Chairman, I am delighted to know that Mr. Heftel attended school in the State of Arizona, because he is, indeed, testimony to the quality of our educational system.

I suggest that we have addressed your problem directly in our State, rather than in a circuitous fashion. Our State board of education has required that all students in the State of Arizona must be able to perform in the area of reading, writing, and arithmetic at a minimal sixth grade level prior to promotion from the eighth grade.

It requires that every school district in the State of Arizona mandate a student's performance at a minimal ninth grade reading level prior to receiving a high school diploma. We are not all that concerned about the diploma being connected with attendance. We are very much concerned that the diploma deal directly with capabilities of the student, as you described.

We have, however, long since recognized that local school districts need to have some input in determining what those levels of proficiency are. They are amazingly standardized, but they have developed independently by each local school district.

So, what I think I am saying is that the local school districts develop their own standards for promotion and graduation. They have a commonsense of what those proficiencies must be. Therefore, a diploma in our State is becoming a diploma of some consequence.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you very much, Mrs. Warner.

Next we will hear from Mr. Barry Beal, supervisor of the Department of Development and Evaluation, Denver Public Schools. Would you like to respond to Mr. Heftel's question?

Mr. BEAL. First, Mr. Heftel, as Mr. Mottl and I chatted last night, he knows that I really don't accept the proposition of slipping problems in this area. We certainly have a problem in this area, but I don't think that it is as great as your phraseology would indicate.

We do have youngsters that do graduate from high school, as I said last night, not only in Denver but across the country, that do excellent jobs. They learn a lot of things, far beyond what we define as minimum competency. We have some that do not, and if we have one it is already too many. We want to help those children.

First in response more directly to your question, I think that the Federal Government can help. I am glad to hear that Mr. Mottl is proposing an amendment to his legislation. I think that it is a positive kind of legislation, and incentive kind of legislation. One could draw the schools systems along with this kind of program.

One way, perhaps the money could be appropriated for school systems to help develop their proficiency, and bring in some outside expertise to develop their tests. Then, perhaps, some follow up money that would help them to develop proficiency review kinds of programs. There is money available to do this in Title I, but those are restricted funds, and perhaps widening them so that the funds could be spent to hire aides and other teachers, to free the teachers that we have now in our system.

Another area where I think that this would be a very positive step, but one that should be not mandated, as you suggested, and bring the school districts along with you, not say: "You do it or you don't get your money."

You should say: "If you do this kind of thing, here is the way that we will help you with your problem."

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you very much.

Mr. Heftel, do you have anything further?

Mr. **Heftel.** I appreciate your responses, and I very quickly would like to again point out that there is a problem, and the problem is one that is not being focused on adequately, namely that at each grade level we should know whether or not a student, in fairness to the student, should be going along in that same system, in that same classroom progression. The minute we realize that this classroom environment is not proper for that student, we need to move that student into whatever it is that will lead that student to the simple proficiencies called, reading, writing, and arithmetic.

I think the main thing that we are going to have to do, with or without Federal intervention, with or without Federal limitations on funding, or restriction of funding, is to say: "We just don't move students along unsuccessfully by themselves, who are even unsuccessful in their experience, in their self-respect," as is magnified here.

What percentage of the students this is affecting, we don't know, but there is a sizable group that it is affecting. I think that this is motivating Mr. Mottl. It is motivating myself in other areas. It is not a problem that I think is being adequately addressed from my experience, and exposure, even where we have, theoretically, made statements such as you are providing here today.

In practice, I am finding that there is some percentage, depending upon the area, of students that simply do not belong in the system we have, and we just simply do not have another system for them.

It is just a case of what kind of problems, what kind of trouble will they represent to themselves in society. That is what has me concerned. I don't know that this hearing can solve any of it, but unless we acknowledge the problem, unless we recognize its seriousness, we will not have solutions forthcoming.

Mr. **Mottl.** Mrs. Warner?

Mrs. **Warner.** Just a quick answer. We have just such a system in our State, your State, originally. I am sorry that you abandoned us, because we could use your expertise right now. We call it CUES, and I speak to it in my testimony. It is the continuation of formal evaluation, mandated by our State legislature in 1972, to develop the capability for tracking each individual child from grade to grade, to see that they are not moved on to the next grade level prior to having achieved the proficiency necessary to do the work of that higher grade level.

So it is an intervention system, if you will, as well as an evaluation system, that says that you cannot let a child develop a failure pattern, and continue to promote them with no real skill capability developed in that youngster.

So, your idea, your concept is excellent. We desperately are trying to do it. We cannot give you an evaluation yet, but we are well on the way.

Mr. **Heftel.** The example that you have cited is what we need in every school district, anywhere at any time. If it is the case of a Federal system, or Federal testing being imposed, we have to know that local school systems are recognizing this problem and are addressing the problem, particularly in the core-cities, the heavy populated cities where we have a high degree of failure to attain or perform.

I wish that I could stay, but I do appreciate the chance to participate.

Dr. **Berry**. Mr. Heftel, earlier you gave an example of the dictionary, and commented that we don't have different languages for each State. One ought to think in terms of national standards. Forty-two of 50 States now have minimal competency programs at some stage of development. I suspect when these programs are fully developed, and when we have found ways to propose additional assistance, it will develop that most people will agree with your common dictionary—common language statement.

I think that it would be inappropriate for me now to propose that each local school board should have some particular standard that I would set, even though we have all recognized the problem.

Mr. **Heftel**. I think that we probably need something that says to all school systems, with the recognition of the Federal level, that within a given school system, we just cannot perpetuate failure and lack of self-identity and self-achievement. That is really what we are saying, but it is a problem far more serious than we are acknowledging.

There is not much being done about it generally, and more being done in the heavily populated areas, the areas that permit this kind of programing because the problem is so overwhelming that you cannot even know how to start addressing it.

Mr. **Mottl**. Thank you very much, Mr. Heftel, for your important contribution to this hearing.

Mr. **Heftel**. It was my pleasure.

Mr. **Mottl**. We will continue again, and Mrs. Warner, if you would be kind enough to give your opening statement. Mrs. Carolyn Warner, superintendent of public instruction for the State of Arizona.

STATEMENT OF CAROLYN WARNER, SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION FOR THE STATE OF ARIZONA

Mrs. **Warner**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for the opportunity of sharing what we in the State of Arizona have done, because we have a number of years of experience in competency based education, the subject of your bill.

A bit of philosophy first, before I speak to our specific system, which I have already alluded to. Our philosophy is rather basic. Education in America, unlike most other nations on our globe, is rooted and grounded in the soil of local control.

Education is to be the responsibility of the States. Indeed, most State departments of education respect and honor greatly local boards of education, and their capability for immediate response to the varying local needs.

There are 17,000 boards of education in America, most of them elected. I was interested in an editorial in yesterday's Star concerning the Board of Education of this community, and the applause that they received in that editorial as elected representatives, acting efficiently, effectively, and well for the education of children in this community. It might be difficult to replicate that on a large, standardized basis.

A local board of education can, indeed, and does respond well. They are our most elementary system of representation.

Second, education in America is not the failure that the scare stories would purport. Again, I must say that you were all products of the American educational system. Now we are very proud of that, and we should not lose sight of it because of the news stories. Those are news stories because they are exceptions, and not the rule.

It cannot be all bad. Its accomplishments have been so great, in fact, that they became known as the can do institutions in American education. It is the finest system in the world, and still is. We are undefined, therefore, we do make a few mistakes, and we are not perfect.

We have been responsive both at the Federal level and, I believe, at the State level, and certainly at the local school level. We felt a need for vocational education, and the Smith Hughes Vocational Education Act was passed in 1917. Proper food for our children become a concern in 1935, when we began donating commodities to the schools. In 1946, the National School Lunch Act was passed.

We were shocked by Sputnik, and the National Defense Education Act was passed in 1958. In 1965, we decided to convert our words into reality, equal educational opportunities for all our children, and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for the educationally deprived became law.

The courts are very much a part of the educational system today. Most cases requiring changes or needing changes, *Brown* v. *The Board of Education* questions, school desegregation, and the court decisions continue, and each and every piece of Federal legislation or court decision requires massive changes in the institution of education.

They have been coming so fast, and they are so new, that education is in a constant state of flux, attempting to adapt and modify, mutate, be able to assimilate and implement all of the changes as they come down the line. Nobody questions the need.

The question is, can any institution undergo that degree of ferment and mutation, and constant change in a short period of time, and still be able to concentrate on the main mission of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, and I know that they are necessary skills for young people to survive.

We know the story, handicapped education, physical education, programs for the gifted, an integrated society, transportation, counseling, academic, psychological, career, all areas, vocational education, health education, breakfast programs, hot lunch programs, community schools, citizenship education, bilingual education, alcohol and drug abuse education, migrant child education, driver and safety education, environmental education, innoculation and vaccination programs, and the list goes on and on, and on, yet the main mission is to educate children in capabilities that are essential for them to maximize their capabilities and succeed in our society.

What I am trying to say is that the last thing on God's green Earth that American education needs today is another Federal mandate, to do that would require us to do things that we are already required to do, and to address our main mission, because that is where the responsibility of the educational institution is.

It is true that we are immensely effective in changing our society. Education is enormously effective in creating those new priroities, and causing them to become realities. But education is the responsibility of the educational institution first. What we do need are fewer mandates. What we do need is less paperwork. What we do need is more parental involvement in order that our teachers and administrators can concentrate on doing what they do best, and that is educate children.

For Arizona students, educators and citizens, House bill 6088 is an unacceptable alternative to the system under which we currently operate. In Arizona we believe strongly in the concept of local autonomy for education.

We are among the seven States in the country that have the greatest degree of local control, and we guard it jealously. Clearly the educational needs to students in Tucson are totally different than those living in Chinle, Ariz., on the Navajo Indian Reservation.

The Arizona Legislature, our legislature, has long recognized the difference in needs and has given local school authority the right to determine its own system of competency based education.

Our system, called the continuous uniform evaluation system was made part of the Arizona law in 1972. Since then, hundreds of thousands of dollars and more importantly, hundreds of thousands of hours have been invested to bring Arizona's local school districts into compliance with the mandate.

The system incorporates uniformity in that local school districts all use: (1) Measurable performance objectives; (2) criterion-reference evaluation measures; (3) alternative learning plans for students who have difficulty achieving the objectives; (4) a recordkeeping system to show student progress from kindergarten through the 12th grade; and (5) a parent-reporting system that informs parents about what their children are learning, and how their child is progressing on the continuum.

This uniformity makes Arizona's CUES program similar to other competency based education programs nationwide. But what makes Arizona's system unique, and in our opinion superior, is the fact that the performance objectives are developed at the local school district level in order to insure standards that are realistic for the community, for those students, and focus on meeting the educational needs of that particular community.

If the State of Arizona was forced to administer a single statewide proficiency test as required by H.R. 6088, this would undermine all of the work that has been done since 1972, I believe.

School districts would feel forced to abandon the systems that they have so painstakingly developed to meet real educational needs in their communities. They would feel pressured into "teaching to the test," and the emphasis would no longer be on skill development, which is what education is all about, but on "passing the test."

The test would become another standardized sacred cow, and the importance of developing individual human potential, which is what we are there to do, would become a secondary consideration.

Just as the difference in educational needs exists between Tucson and Chinle, Ariz., there are wide discrepancies between the educational priorities of Boston, Mass. and Anchorage, Alaska, as Dr. Berry alluded to.

The Arizona Legislature found it to be unworkable to ask Tucson and Chinle to operate on the same standards. H.R. 6088 is simply unacceptable for, now, a 15-person panel selected at the national level will be dictating curriculum requirements for Arizona schools. It is an unworkable and unsatisfactory alternative which would not bring our schools any closer to meeting the needs of all students.

Mr. MOTTL. Mrs. Warner, could we interrupt for one minute, so I will have a chance to go and vote, and I will be back within 10 minutes.

We will recess for 10 minutes. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, a short recess was taken.]

Mr. MOTTL. The subcommittee will now reconvene.

Mrs. WARNER. I am going to conclude with a few remarks, that once again summarize and have to do——

Mr. MOTTL. We have gotten the gist that you really endorse our legislation here.

Mrs. WARNER. I applaud you for your concern. I am totally supportive, as are you, of competency in education.

Mr. MOTTL. When the States and local governments do not do their job, this is when we have to step in. If we were all like Arizona, doing the job that the Berea schools are doing, or Denver, we would not have any need for this legislation whatsoever.

Mrs. WARNER. The beauty, I think, of this system of States being responsible for education, and the degree of local control that we have, is that you have peaks and valleys, you have areas in which the accomplishments are not great, but you have those that are lamplighters of a sort, that are accomplishing so that others may follow.

Therefore, we do not have to continually reinvent the wheel, and perhaps that is the beauty of the concept of local control.

I would like to finish in this way. I would like to say that it is unquestionably true that competency based education is an essential element. We have to get to the point that Mr. Heftel spoke to, that a high school diploma means more, much, much more than simple living and attendance in the public schools.

The key is not a test, because the test is a measurement taking instrument. It is like taking somebody's temperature. You take the temperature and you find out whether the person is well or sick. But the temperature does not prescribe or diagnose the cause of the illness, if it is illness, nor does it prescribe the cure. It is just taking the temperature.

When you take the temperature nationally, you simply have an average, and that does not help you much either. So it seems that standards are absolutely needed, but uniform standards are probably the last thing we want, either in the State or as a nation.

Mr. Mottl. I feel that this is the beginning of a Federal system of education, to be totally frank. In our State of Arizona, the Arizona Education Association is supporting the testimony that I provided today. The Arizona Board of Education at the State level supports the testimony that I have shared with you today, as well as the Arizona Administrators Association, as well as the parent-teachers' associations. Indeed, it is supported by at least those chief State school officers, my counterparts with whom I have spoken in regard to the matter of being here today, and sharing with you my concerns.

So there is a degree of uniformity in view, in opposition to the beginnings of a birth of a Federal system of education that is overwhelming. That is a fear, to be blunt.

Finally, I want to thank you for the opportunity. I want to tell you that what we need least of all is this kind of help in the form of a mandate. What we need most of all is this kind of help from the standpoint of concern, and willingness to help at the local level, as Dr. Berry has alluded to as a possibility this morning.

Mr. MOTTL. We are making this a voluntary program, since last Monday. You probably prepared your testimony before you heard that, but this is now going to be a voluntary program as proposed.

Mrs. WARNER. Let me say, Mr. Chairman, that this pleases me enormously, because I had looked upon it, in the prepared testimony, and I used a very difficult word, I used the word "blackmail," because our funding will be reduced if we do not accomplish according to the Federal commission standards. That, indeed, is the antithesis of what we are trying to acomplish.

If, indeed, you can help us, as you have indicated in your amendment, then you can help us best by not adding another burden to our bag, as we are trying to climb up that hill, to accomplish what we must for children. So your alteration of the bill, I support, from the standpoint of it being voluntary, from the standpoint of the willingness of the Federal Government to assist through funding, but to set Federal standards, and to look at this as the incipiency of a Federal system of education is, in all likelihood, the sort of thing that is going to be very difficult for many of us.

Mr. MOTTL. We now agree.

Mrs. WARNER. Thank you kindly, sir, for the opportunity to testify.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you very much for your fine statement, Mrs. Warner.

[Additional material submitted for the record follows:]

ARIZONA SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, INC.,
Phoenix, Ariz., August 29, 1977.

MRS. CAROLYN WARNER,
Superintendent, Arizona Department of Education,
Phoenix, Ariz.

DEAR CAROLYN: Thank you for the copy of Representative Mottl's legislation on testing. This is certainly another giant step in the wrong direction.

The legislation would, I believe, accomplish the following:

1. Add another expensive commission at the national level. (Incidently, this unnecessary commission neglected to include any school administrators.)
2. It would be the first step towards a national curriculum which could not meet the diversity of needs in the states.
3. It would create a standard nationally which might be far below that desired in various states.
4. The general problem of "teaching to the test" could void some of the creative teaching now taking place.
5. The entire system would cause another flood of paper work to request the grants, submit plans, develop examinations, etc. These grants would also add to the cost of the national program.

If Mr. Mottl feels a bill is necessary, I'd suggest that he stop on page 2, line 4, after the word proficiency.

This matter will be discussed at our Executive officers meeting in D.C. next month and I'll certainly encourage all states to work against the bill. A special effort will be made to talk to the men from Ohio to see if they can head Mr. Mottl in a different direction.

Cordially,

MIKE MCCORMICK,
Executive Director.

Arizona School Boards Association, Inc.,
Phoenix, Ariz., September 6, 1977.

Mrs. Ronald H. Warner,
Superintendent, Arizona Department of Education, 1535 West Jefferson, Phoenix, Ariz.

Dear Mrs. Warner: At the outset, I wish to thank you for asking for my thoughts, as a school board member and as Executive Director of the Arizona School Boards Association, on the impending amendment (H.R. 6088) to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The amendment introduced by Mr. Mottl would require state educational agencies to establish basic standards of educational proficiency applicable to secondary school students.

With your kind indulgence, I would like to (1) briefly review the background of ASBA, since our association identity has a direct bearing on the proposed legislation; (2) outline the legislative history of our association; and (3) provide, from a general perspective, the rationale which we believe compels the defeat of the proposed legislation.

At this point, I would like to turn to the Association's background.

I. The Arizona School Boards Association was created in 1950 by the legislature. It's purpose as stated by the legislation, was to coordinate educational policies and procedures and to submit from time to time recommendations, to the superintendent of public instruction, on pending legislation relating to educational subjects likely to effect improvement in the management of local school districts.

Today the Association has two major purposes—both of equal importance, and both inter-related. First, we serve to be an effective resources for our membership. A resource to which all members can turn for help and support in making their schools viable institutions in a time of stress and great change.

Second, we are a strong, constructive influence—a force, if you will, for safeguarding and strengthening the institution of local lay control in every arena in which public policy is shaped.

II. The Arizona School Boards Association has grown in these past 27 years, to an association that represents 230 of the State's 233 school districts or better than 99 percent of the State public school students. Legislatively ASBA has represented the students by giving testimony before the legislature, and through the National School Boards Association's Federal relations network, to the Congress of the United States. It is with a source of great pride that the Association's credibility has been recognized by our congressional delegation in Washington as well as the State legislature.

With this background in mind let me turn to the proposed legislation.

III. In the first half of the 1970's, "accountability" became the key word in educational circles, particularly with the Federal Government. Apparently the only thing H.R. 6088 would change is the phrase "Basic Educational Standards" rather than accountability.

The mythical belief that everything in education can be measured which this legislation seems to assume, is not informed thinking. How long will it be before the legislation will be used as an excuse to cut funds for education. Accountability has its place in education, but it also has its limitations. Proper management and appropriate control in order to deliver educational services are being widely misunderstood to mean casting all education into molds of measurable systems with measurable behavioral objectives. If this pattern is allowed to continue, as it exists in some states today, we will reduce education to the kind of training Pavlov's dog was subjected to. If everything is to be reduced to those things we can measure on a standardized test and those parts of education that can be weighed on a cost-effective basis, we will have lost sight of the real purposes of education.

What I am really saying is the disadvantages of such legislation appear to be that education which deals with understanding, enthusiasm, curiosity, appreciation, motivation, and commitment is extremely difficult to reduce to specific measurable competencies. As a consequence, many important ideas are not included or are so reduced to trivialities as to become meaningless.

Let me make it abundantly clear that school board members do not fear careful examination to determine if schools are performing as they should. Parents and taxpayers have not only a right but a responsibility to demand such accounting.

However, as I view the long range effect of this proposed bill; what it is really saying, in effect, is that children shall take achievement tests, district by district, and those districts that produce low scores will receive less funding. Such reasoning does not recognize the abilities of the students, ignores their background, fails to consider their educational objectives, and otherwise demonstrates the havoc to be wrought by legislating without knowledge of the subject area. "Produce high scores or face low funding" is the eventuality of this type of legislation. If the proposed legislation were enacted, the effect, would likely be for school districts with the ablest students and the most supportive homes—in other words, those who need financial bolstering the least—would get the most money.

Finally, and the most feared net result of this bill, in my opinion, is that it would lead to a "national curriculum" and forever remove local control from the people and therefore, would further erode the constitutional designation of responsibility for the governance of public education. I view the legislation as saying we (board members) do not know enough about the needs of our children educationally, and that our vision is too narrow.

In my 23 years of observation as a board member and 7 years as Executive Director of ASBA, I would submit that the precise opposite is true. Not only are local school boards serving the children well but they are doing it better every year! Today's school board members and I point with pride, largely because of the services provided by the ASBA and our National Association, are better informed, better equipped, better trained than any of their predecessors.

Thank you for permitting me to express my views on such a pressing matter.

Sincerely,

LOU ELLA KLEINZ,
Executive Director,
Arizona School Boards Assn., Inc.

ARIZONA CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS,
Phoenix, Ariz., September 13, 1977.

Hon. CARL PERKINS,
U.S. House of Representatives,
House Committee on Education and Labor,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN PERKINS: The Arizona PTA wishes to express its opposition to H.R. 6088. (Mottl bill).

We are deeply concerned that passage of this bill would further erode local control of education, a principle which we of Arizona PTA strongly uphold.

While we support educational accountability and minimum standards as a concept vital to quality education, we feel such decisions should be made at the closest level possible to the pupils affected. Such decisions should be made with the direct involvement of those who best know the needs of the children: The local parents and teachers of those children.

As a State, Arizona has established the kind of minimum standards intended in this bill, however, the autonomy of local school districts has been retained due to the approach taken by our legislature.

We have strongly supported Federal assistance to public education, and believe that adequate and appropriate assistance, with well designed incentive programs needed in our schools. We hope the Federal Government will continue to operate in this kind of role.

We oppose the establishment of a National Committee to create Federal standards for education, which clearly opens the door to total Federal control of education. It is not our belief that the public desires, or needs, federally controlled education.

Respectfully submitted,

DR. MARY A. MURPHY, *President,*
Arizona Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Arizona Education Association,
Phoenix, Ariz., September 12, 1977.

Mrs. Carolyn Warner, *Superintendent,*
Arizona Department of Education,
Phoenix, Ariz.

Dear Mrs. Warner: You asked for comments from AEA on H.R. 6088 (Mottl bill) on which you are going to testify soon.

As you might guess, I feel the legislation is unnecessary. Arizona, as you know, like many other states, has, by state law, established an evaluation system (C.U.E.S.). Further, the intial provisions in H.R. 6088, with the exception of state established and implemented standards, are being met without benefit of a Federal law.

Under present State provisions, districts are responsible for establishing and implementing standards. General guidance only is provided by the State. Our citizens prefer local autonomy in these matters.

As to the specific bill, the following are problems I see:

> Establishment of Federal standards would lead to the impositoin of a Federal curriculum. These precepts violate the notion of states rights and abrogate the constitutional right and responsibility of a state to educate its citizens.
>
> The issue is further compounded in assuming that a 15-member commission could set standards agreeable to each of the 50 states. Different groups have different standards for education. We are far short of having a national consensus.
>
> Should those standards be set and imposed, the legislation provides no avenue for revision. Society's values and attitudes change. Standards held today by any particular group are not the same as those held 10, 15, or 50 years ago by those same groups.
>
> Also, should standards be set, the legislation does not provide for handicapped youngsters who may not be able to meet those standards.
>
> Beyond the variance in standards, there is no consensus definition of "passing grade." Defining "passing grade" would be as arbitrary as setting standards.
>
> The time specified for the testing is not conducive to best use of test results; the year before graduation leaves little time for remediation.
>
> Testing is an imprecise science, subject to abuse and mis-application. Test results at best are indicators, not absolutes. For example, the panel under Willard Wertz empowered to examine the decline of SAT scores, questioned the advisability of making promotion contingent on standardized test scores.
>
> Above all, H.R. 6088 will not enhance educational opportunity, but can, if implemented, have the effect of withholding funds for programs where the need is greatest. The Educational Testing Service study by Feldmesser effectively refuted the feasibility of the Albert Quie proposal to base funding on test results.

One can only conclude that the money spent on a testing program as mandated by H.R. 6088 would instead be better spent on direct services to youngsters.

I hope this will help you. Thank you for your solicitation of AEA's thoughts.

Professionally,

Darrell Guy, *President.*

Mr. Mottl. Last, but not least, we will hear from Mr. Barry Beal, Supervisor, Department of Development and Evaluation, Denver Public Schools, which was the pioneer in competency testing. We certainly appreciate the opportunity for you to be here, Mr. Beal. It was very helpful being on the program with you last night.

STATEMENT OF BARRY B. BEAL, SUPERVISOR, DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION, DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mr. Beal. Mr. Chairman, and members of the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education: My purpose is twofold, first to inform you about the Denver experience with regard to minimum competency examinations, and, then, second to comment on the proposed legislation identified as H.R. 6088.

Denver is one school system in the United States which currently operates a testing program designed to assure that every high school graduate possesses minimum competency in four basic areas—arithmetic, spelling, grammar and reading comprehension. If a senior doesn't pass all four tests, he receives no diploma. He is given, instead, a certificate of attendance.

We strongly feel that our program lends respect to a Denver public schools diploma. We call this testing program P. & R.—proficiency and review. It has been operating in Denver since 1960; however, the planning for the tests began 2 years earlier.

In 1958, a public opinion survey of some 400 business and industrial employers in the Denver metropolitan area revealed that questions were being raised about the validity of the high school diploma. Some graduates, it was believed, lacked competence in the basic skills. The superintendent and the board of education agreed that a demonstration of competence in these areas would become a graduation requirement.

In 1959, the proficiency and review tests were developed in cooperation with the California test bureau, and were designed to have four parts: Numerical, spelling, language, and reading proficiency.

In 1960 these tests were administered to seniors, some of whom failed one or more parts. Remedial classes on a voluntary basis were established in the high schools to tutor those pupils who had failed any part of the tests. A voluntary summer school program was established to allow remedial instruction in the basic skills areas, and the tests were administered again at the end of that sequence. Only 3 percent of the seniors failed to obtain a diploma, receiving a certificate of attendance instead.

Two more years of experience produced approximately the same results. It was then decided to give the first administration of the tests to students during their first semester in 11th grade, this would provide additional time for remediation. The failure rate stabilized at approximately 1.5 percent for the next few years.

The numerical proficiency test is limited to the four fundamental arithmetical operations and basic concepts. The spelling proficiency test involves the recognition of the correct spelling of words. The language proficiency test requires the student to detect errors in punctuation, capitalization, and basic grammar. The reading proficiency test includes sections on reading comprehension and vocabulary. The comprehension section involves recognition of details and the ability to make simple inference.

These tests are used to help teachers and administrators identify students who do not meet locally-established achievement levels in the basic educational skills. Once identified, these students are given remedial work or placed in review programs. The tests are appropriate for administration to students in secondary schools during the latter part of the eighth grade or in higher grades.

Our school system follows a proficiency and review program routine of:

1. Initial testing of all students at a certain grade level, using all of the proficiency and review tests;

2. A period of review or remedial work for those students who fail to attain the required level on one or more tests and are, therefore, considered to be deficient in one or more skills.

3. Retesting with an alternative form of the test. The students take only the test or tests which they "failed" on the initial testing.

4. A repetition of this cycle for youngsters who continue to fail.

The individual student is the focal point of the entire program. He is being helped to understand his weaknesses in the skills and to overcome them.

At present, the P. & R. tests are administered in December and April of each year in grade 9 with makeup in 10 through 12. Secondary school pupils who fail one or more sections are programed into established instructional programs in the basic skills areas to assist them in overcoming deficiencies.

In general, we are pleased with the results of this approach, and are now looking into the possibility of testing children as early as the end of the 3rd and 6th grades with the idea of picking up weaknesses even sooner than we do now.

I support, in general, the idea of minimum competency testing programs. However, it is my strong belief that the local educational agency should be responsible for determining minimum competency for their pupils and have complete control of the use of such tests.

The rest of my prepared statement repeats many of the statements that these other people have given, so I will just summarize briefly and say, testing programs can serve a variety of purposes, but mostly they should be used to help pupils. They should be of as positive a nature as possible. We are all aware of the possibility of misuse of tests and test data. In order to minimize the probability of misuse of testing programs, and to maximize the benefits of such programs for pupils in the school district, the local educational agency should have complete control.

Again, I would support the modification of your bill to make it a voluntary program, to bring the school districts along with you, if you wish to develop these kinds of things, develop these kinds of tests. Here is what we will do to help you do this. I think that this is a positive approach.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Beal follows:]

DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
September 1977

MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTS:

Testimony Given to the House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education

Washington, D.C.
September 14, 1977

Prepared by
Department of Development and Evaluation
Barry B. Beal, Supervisor

Mr. Chairman and Representatives on the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education:

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In 1958 a public opinion survey of some 400 business and industrial employers in the Denver metropolitan area revealed that questions were being raised about the validity of the high school diploma. Some graduates, it was believed, lacked competence in the basic skills. The Superintendent and the Board of Education agreed that a demonstration of competence in basic skills should become a graduation requirement.

In 1959 the Proficiency and Review tests (P & R) were developed in cooperation with the California Test Bureau. The tests were designed to have four parts: Numerical, Spelling, Language, and Reading Proficiency.

In 1960 these tests were administered to seniors, some of whom failed one or more parts. Remedial classes on a voluntary basis were established in the high schools to tutor those pupils who had failed any part of the tests. A voluntary summer school program was established to allow remedial instruction in the basic skills areas, and the tests were administered again. Only three percent of the seniors failed to obtain a diploma, receiving a certificate of attendance instead.

Two more years of experience produced approximately the same results. It was then decided to give the first administration of the tests to students during their first semester in eleventh grade; this would provide additional time for remediation. The failure rate stabilized at approximately 1.5 percent for the next few years.

The tests are designed to ascertain the students' attainment of established levels of achievement in basic educational skills.

The Numerical Proficiency test is limited to the four fundamental arithmetical operations and basic concepts. The Spelling Proficiency test involves the recognition of the correct spelling of words. The Language Proficiency test requires the student to detect errors in punctuation, capitalization, and basic grammar. The Reading Proficiency test includes sections on reading comprehension and vocabulary. The comprehension section involves recognition of details and the ability to make simple inferences.

These tests are used to help teachers and administrators identify students who do not meet locally-established achievement levels in the basic educational skills. Once identified, these students are given remedial work or placed in review programs. The tests are appropriate for administration to students in secondary schools during the latter part of the eighth grade or in higher grades.

Our school system follows a Proficiency and Review program routine of:

1. Initial testing of all students at a certain grade level using all of the Proficiency and Review tests
2. A period of review or remedial work for those students who fail to attain the required level on one or more tests and are therefore considered to be deficient in one or more skills
3. Retesting with an alternate form of the test. The students take only the test or tests which they "failed" on the initial testing.
4. A repetition of the cycle for students who continue to fail.

The individual student is the focal point of the entire program. He is being helped to understand his weaknesses in the basic skills and to overcome them.

SECURE INSTRUMENTS

The P & R tests are secure instruments. All test booklets are numbered, and records are maintained to account for each one.

Numerical Proficiency Test

The Numerical Proficiency test is designed to measure ability in the four fundamental arithmetical operations and in basic concepts. The fundamental operations are applied to whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and denominate numbers. The test items concerned with other basic concepts involve: conversion from one to another of fractions, decimal numerals, and percents; expression of large numbers and monetary amounts in numerals; computation of percentages; and determination of relative sizes of numbers in lists of fractions and decimal numerals.

The 50 items in the test are divided equally among the five areas: addition, subtraction, meanings, multiplication, and division. All items are multiple-choice items and have five alternatives, with the fifth being "None" in 48 of the items.

Spelling Proficiency Test

The Spelling Proficiency test is designed to measure the ability to recognize the correct spelling of words. All words used were checked against the New

Iowa Spelling Scale and commonly used spelling textbooks. Most of the words can be classified at "eighth grade level," although a few are easier and a few more difficult. The common types of spelling errors are represented: doubling or failing to double consonants; the omission of a "silent letter" vowel substitution; the "ie rule"; and phonetic spelling. The words are presented in multiple-choice items of four words with the fifth choice being "None."

A special feature of the format is the use of script to simulate handwriting.

Language Proficiency Test

The Language Proficiency test is designed to measure the ability to recognize correctly written English. The test contains two selections, which represent compositions which might have been written by students. These are printed in script to resemble handwriting. It is the examinee's task to proofread these selections. In the 50-item test, each line of the selections represents one test item. The student is to decide whether the line is correct or contains an error in punctuation, capitalization, or grammar. For this test, errors in word usage are grouped with errors in grammar. The types of items are distributed to include: 20 percent punctuation; 20 percent capitalization; 40 percent grammar; and 20 percent no errors.

Reading Proficiency Test

The Reading Proficiency test is divided into two sections: reading comprehension and vocabulary. The first is designed to measure comprehension as reflected in the ability to recognize details stated in a reading passage and in the ability to make simple inferences. The vocabulary section measures knowledge of word meaning.

The reading comprehension section consists of three short reading passages with each followed by eight statements. The examinee is to read a passage and then decide whether each statement agrees with the preceding passage, disagrees with it, or cannot be inferred from it. The ability to recognize stated details is tested by approximately two-thirds of the items; the ability to make simple inferences is tested by about one-third of them.

Level of difficulty, along with content appeal, was a major consideration in selection of reading passages. The grade level, as calculated by the Dale-Chall Readability Formula, averages about 8.5 for each form of the test, with the level of difficulty within each form ranging from Grades 7-8 to Grades 9-10. Reading passages were selected from topics that were considered to be of general interest to teenagers.

The vocabulary section of the Reading Proficiency test contains 26 test items. Each item consists of a lead word followed by a list of four words. The examinee's task is to select from the list the one word that means the same, or about the same, as the lead word. The Basic Vocabulary and the Advanced Vocabulary word lists prepared by Educational Developmental Laboratories, Inc., were used to establish the grade level for each vocabulary word. With few exceptions, the four alternatives are less difficult than the lead word. Most of the words are not above eighth grade difficulty yet are commonly used by adults.

At present, the P & R tests are administered in December and April of each year in grade nine with make-up in ten through twelve. Secondary school pupils who fail one or more sections are programmed into established instructional programs in the basic skills areas to assist them in overcoming deficiencies.

In general, we are pleased with the results of this approach and are now looking into the possibility of testing children as early as the end of the 3rd and 6th grades with the idea being to pick up weaknesses even sooner than we now do.

I support, in general, the idea of minimum competency testing programs; however, it is my strong belief that the local educational agency should be responsible for determining minimum competency for their pupils and have complete control of the use of such tests.

An experience we had in Denver may serve to illustrate the importance of local control of minimum competency testing programs. During the school year of 1967-1968, an evaluation of the P & R tests was conducted by the research department. It was found that the tests may have been selecting on factors other than strictly cognitive, such as psychological and sociological. We found some pupils, realizing the importance of passing this test, would "freeze" and score lower than their previous academic experience would indicate they might.

As a result of that evaluation, the recommendation was made that the tests be given much earlier in the pupil's tenure than 11th grade so that more time could be spent helping pupils to overcome their problems. The emphasis of the testing program is on identification of pupil weaknesses. The tests serve as a useful guidance tool in that they help place pupils in appropriate remedial programs if needed.

In cases such as this, it is important for the local educational agency to have the flexibility to make such changes for the benefit of their pupils. A federally mandated program would not have this flexibility. A district would have to petition Congress for changes; this takes time. Some requested changes may not be made, and those that are may not be beneficial to all other school districts involved.

I make this statement, I believe, as one who is uniquely qualified to comment on legislation in this area. I have been involved with this examination as a teacher who conducted review classes for those who failed parts of the examination, as a tester who administered the tests, as a researcher who conducted evaluations of the tests, and as an administrator of the districtwide testing program of which it is a part.

My experience leads me to believe that a minimum competency test should spring from the needs of the community a school district serves, as it did in Denver. Only in this way will such a program be accepted readily by citizens and be truly helpful to children.

There is now in the field of educational evaluation a controversy regarding the subject of testing for minimum competency.

This subject was discussed at a National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) meeting in Boulder, Colorado, in mid-June, 1977. W. James Popham of the University of California at Los Angeles and Gene V. Glass of the University of Colorado debated the merits of such an endeavor.

Dr. Popham declared, "Testing for mastery of minimums offers us a way to improve some of today's deficiencies in education. There are no right competencies, but there are competencies that are more defensible than others. When you think about which are the most appropriate, you have to contrast what we might have in the future and what we have right now."

Dr. Glass countered, "My fields of testing and psychology are incapable of giving any reasonable or safe answers to the questions, 'How much must a pupil know to succeed in life?' and 'What is the minimal level of proficiency that ought to be required of graduating seniors?'

"Teachers and their consultants attempting to define competencies and to write test items intended to reflect minimal levels of acquisition are engaged in a bootless and potentially embarrassing endeavor. They are likely to construct a competency-based test for graduation that, perhaps, only half the seniors can pass. Then they will be forced to back off and be accused publicly of either not knowing what students ought to know or else not teaching students what they ought to learn.

"They are, in fact, guilty on neither count," Glass declared.

"I'm not against testing," Glass emphasized. "I'm against the use of it that says we can draw a line between competence and incompetence."

Testing is not the means of alleviating "our current agonies about school standards," he said. "The safe and prudent response is to examine the teaching process. Observe teaching and inspect the curriculum. Where they prove vacuous and flimsy, change them."*

While I am not as pessimistic in attitude as Dr. Glass with regard to setting minimum competency, I believe, as Dr. Popham does, it is a very difficult job. It should be done, if at all, in the local school districts, based on their needs and problems, and should not come as a mandate from outside the local educational agency.

In view of the foregoing, I feel the charge of the proposed National Commission on Basic Education to "establish basic standards of educational proficiency designed to evaluate the reading, writing, and mathematics skills of secondary school students" is not a useful nor worthwhile endeavor if these standards are to be applied to each and every local educational agency in the United States receiving federal funds.

Testing programs can serve a variety of purposes, but mostly, they should be used to help pupils; they should be of as positive a nature as possible. We are all aware of the possibility of misuse of tests and test data. In order to minimize the probability of misuse of testing programs and to maximize the benefits of such programs for pupils in a school district, the local educational agency should have complete control.

*NAEP Newsletter, Vol. 10, August, 1977, No. 4

Mr. **Mottl.** Thank you very much, Mr. Beal. We appreciate your fine testimony.

I would like to proffer a couple of questions, and I would like to proffer them to Dr. Berry and any of you who would like to answer the questions, just feel free to answer.

Dr. Berry, you stated that the inclination of the administration is to adopt a role to assist the States in establishing standards. You stated further that it might be useful for the Federal Government to develop new and improved tests.

It sounds to me like the administration and I are coming to the same position. Namely, have the Federal Government develop tests for voluntary use by the States and local school districts. Do you have any comment on that?

Dr. **Berry.** I do want to comment on what I understand to be a modification in your proposal. Were we to have a choice between mandatory or voluntary national standards, we would absolutely prefer the voluntary ones.

I would emphasize that any voluntary testing proposal has to be very carefully drafted. If we want a testing proposal to be taken seriously, if we want it to motivate students and to be a recognized standard, there may develop a temptation for schools everywhere to teach to the test. Superintendent Warner pointed this out earlier.

The idea of a national commission to set standards must also be given a great deal of careful consideration.

In discussing a voluntary test proposal, a number of questions are raised about local control. It might even be better to suggest some kind of State mission. The Federal role would be to encourage States to set up State programs and to provide technical and financial assistance to the States for those programs.

We have to be aware that people may be sensitive to the idea of a national group setting up national standards as opposed to State standards which could have the same results in terms of the quality. I would point out those caveats.

Mr. **Mottl.** But is it impossible to come up with a variety of national standards to avoid teaching to the test?

Dr. **Berry.** It may be possible to do so. I am simply saying that whatever is developed must be done carefully. We must consider all those possibilities and avoid all those pitfalls; we don't want to create a lot of unnecessary resistance to the idea or to move in the wrong direction.

Mr. **Mottl.** Mrs. Warner, would you like to address yourself to that?

Mrs. **Warner.** In reference to your last question, we have developed a system that I think is an effective one, in that we have established goals at each grade level in each major subject area.

We use these goals in order to select our textbooks for the local district classroom use. We have returned textbook selection from the State level back to the local level. We are working in reverse, back to the local district wherever possible.

They use the goals and objectives that are established for, let us say, reading, or mathematics, introduction of a concept, familiarity with a concept, mastery of the concept at various levels. So that we have a standard established for goals, for the youngsters, in the various subject areas.

If we were to work at a national level, and put together a composite of States to look at this sort of thing, it is indeed possible that that short of an objective process could be developed. Then, let each State develop its testing programs as it will toward reaching those goals.

But as you say, there are areas of competency that a youngster must know in order to function in our society.

Mr. MOTTL. Thank you very much, Mrs. Warner.

I would like to address this question to Dr. Berry, and any of you on this panel.

There has been an argument that Federal standards and tests would be likened to Federal control of curriculum, and that various schools would tend to teach to the test. Do you believe that the concern is valid if the standards and tests are confined to the basic skills of reading; writing, and mathematics.

If so, isn't the purpose of the standards and tests to see if the various schools are developing those skills, and to encourage those which are not, to start developing them?

Dr. BERRY. I think that they might teach to the test, which was part of the question. But if they were teaching to certain accepted levels of reading, math, and writing competency, maybe that would not be all bad, to answer the central part of your question.

However, it might still be preferable for us to provide support and encouragement to the States to set that kind of standard for themselves, rather than making it a national standard.

I just don't think that there is any way, unless we are very careful, this whole issue, which is a constitutional issue of local control and State control, as opposed to national control. I think that we should encourage States, and we should try to have them develop minimum standards. Even if they taught to those, I would not be quite so disturbed.

I am just a little worried about us saying exactly what those standards should be, even if it is the same thing that the States would say back to us, if we asked them what the standards would be. That would be preferable.

Mr. MOTTL. Mr. Andrisek?

Mr. ANDRISEK. On the plane down this morning, Mr. Mottl, we talked about the change that you indicated in the 6088, and I like the term that you used. I was encouraged, and I sensed from that that what you were suggesting as a possibility, that the Federal role might be to encourage and support with some financial backing this effort throughout the country.

It would seem to me that if that were done in a proper fashion, it would be possible to provide not only dollar resources but people resources from the Federal Government to aid the local school districts, or the State in setting up the standards which are appropriate for the local school districts and the State.

I have a little bone to pick with Mrs. Warner on one issue. I am fearful that if the Federal Government gets involved in setting goals, that is a pretty powerful tool. I really am not very enthusiastic about that in terms of the local school system.

However, I do sense that it is possible for this piece of legislation to make an impact on the schools with Federal support and Federal help, without the big issue of Federal control and Federal intervention where it ought not to be.

Mr. Mottl. Thank you.

Recognizing that no standard is perfect, do you believe it is possible to develop a standard of educational proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics which define what students need to know to function effectively in society?

Dr. Berry. I think it is possible to do that. I think that it is being done in some places. There is one ingredient not included in that formulation: That is having parents decide themselves what they think the schools ought to be teaching at an appropriate level.

It is entirely possible to design effective tests. May I interject one comment? It is not that we in the Administration are opposed to tests. We use them now in a variety of different programs. We are not even opposed to tests being used to indicate that some students are more competent or able than others.

The Presidential Scholars Program every year recognizes top students from every jurisdiction in the country. The top one percent are selected on the basis of tests—SAT or the ACT.

So it is not that we are opposed to tests. It is just that we have to be sure about the voluntariness. We are talking minimal competency, something that is important in a student's going from grade to grade and graduating from high school, and getting a job. Parents in every local jurisdiction are involved with the school boards attempting to determine what they think this competency should be.

But, yes, it is entirely possible to develop a test which effectively measures one's competency level in reading, writing and arithmetic.

Mr. Mottl. Mr. Beal?

Mr. Beal. Yes; I would like to put in one caveat here with regard to minimum competency examinations. I think one wants to be very careful with minimum competency tests, regardless of where they are developed, and where they are used, that those minimum competency tests remain minimum competency tests, remain floor tests, and do not then become a maximum competency test.

I think that the further you get away from the local school district, the more likely that might be, if a national examination were developed. The school district then might begin to teach those concepts to the exclusion, maybe, of other ones. You might run into the problem of what you expect maximally, rather than minimally, from pupils.

You have to be careful of that kind of thing.

Mr. Mottl. Thank you very much, Mr. Beal.

Do you object to having an independent panel representing various disciplines, devise these standards, rather than rely solely on educational experts?

Dr. Berry. I have no problem with having an independent panel of experts in various fields devise tests and standards. But as I pointed out, it might be better to have standards devised for each State, or have some recognition of the State boundaries and jurisdictions and responsibilities with this independent group of experts.

You might have several such groups as opposed to having one group; but I do support the independent nature of the expertise and advice

Mr. Mottl. Mr. Andrisek?

Mr. Andrisek. I think the field of education has no corner on the market of knowledge about teaching or learning, necessarily. I think that we could use the expertise from many fields.

I would particularly like to use the expertise of the parents of kids. I think that all of the parents have a stake in what we are talking about here today, and many deserve a voice someplace along the line as to what is important to their children.

Mr. Mottl. Mrs. Warner?

Mrs. Warner. On the State level, we do have such a group. It is comprised of a variety of constituencies, and they are 150 total, they are parents, school board members, teachers, administrators, 30 representatives from business and industry and labor.

We feel that it is vital to have that kind of cross-section. The latter group, for example, supports to a large degree the education enterprise through taxes, and the continuum is that they accept the students when they graduate from high school and university one of two ways: Either to become their employees, or those students become consumers.

So it is vital that all communities be involved in the process in any kind of goal setting, and certainly in the area of setting standards we must have the involvement of that one key group, and that is parents, reinforcing Dr. Berry's comments.

At the State level, where there is a degree of ownership, where there is the capability of individual input, it is an excellent concept, and works very well. It certainly has in the one specific case that I am most familiar with.

At the national level, the commission should contain a great deal of expertise, be they independent, be they experts, whatever they may be, they will be looked upon with suspicion at the State level because no one feels, individually or independently, that they have that kind of expertise. We have to work with large groups to distill the truth.

Mr. Mottl. Thank you very much, Mrs. Warner.

The last question I have, there has been much talk about cultural bias in testing, designing tests to measure performance against these standards, it is obvious that the question should be structured such as the results reasonably reflect the child's ability in relation to the standards, which is not within the current state of the testing art.

Does anybody have any comments on that?

Dr. Berry. Do you mean, can you have a test that will, in fact, reflect these competencies?

Mr. Mottl. Yes, when we talk about cultural bias and competencies.

Dr. Berry. You may be able to. There are experts heavily involved in developing tests who tell us that there are problems of cultural bias in some test areas. The extent of cultural bias varies from subject to subject. It is possible, I think, to reduce the bias; however it gets more difficult as you get more involved in subjects where it is easy to become culturally biased. There is a lot of dispute already about this aspect of testing.

Mr. Mottl. Mrs. Warner?

Mrs. **Warner.** Mr. Mottl, I would have to accede to Dr. Berry's remarks. It is an indistinct and not yet fully developed art, this business of testing, but what the people at the local school district level are interested in, and what you are interested in is not the test. The test is just a measurement. It is just a matter of measurement. What you are interested in is that our youngsters at the kindergarten level are achieving certain capabilities, so that at the first-grade level they have the skills necessary to do the work. So that in the second-grade level, they can use the skills that are developed in the first.

We are interested in competencies, and the testing is just the process we use to determine where we are. It is just like odometer on the car, it tells you how far you have gone, but it does not tell you where you are going.

We need help at the Federal level, if there is to be help, as you indicate you may amend your bill, in order that States may have the resources which they presently largely do not have, in order to help work with their local school districts to develop those competency capabilities, and to bring each instructional unit into the subcomponents, to determine whether or not the child is succeeding. To break math into 16 sections in order to be able to evaluate 1. Take the child through the test to see where he is.

If they fail 4, and are competent in 12, then concentrate on the 4 in which they are weak, so that they can move on to the next level. That is a matter of human potential development that we are really talking about. The test is just the process to determine where we are.

So the cultural bias that could be built into a test should, in all likelihood, not be built into a test, to test the competencies. If you are looking for something else in the test, if you are measuring American students on whether or not they can identify a maple leaf, a test that was developed in Canada, then we have a little bias built in.

If you are asking a child on an Indian reservation to identify photographs or pictures, and they have never seen a waffle iron, and the waffle iron is among the choice, and that is the picture, then that is built in, and it is wrong.

When you are talking about competencies, I should think that we could easily fly well above built-in cultural problems for youngsters.

Mr. **Mottl.** Thank you very much.

Mr. **Andrisek.** Let me express one thought. It comes back to the issue of what is the purpose of the testing in the first place. If the purpose of the testing is to prevent some students from graduating from high school because they don't have certain skills, then I think one has to be terribly concerned about whatever bias may be built in the test.

On the other hand, if the instrument is used as you suggested, as a means of diagnosing difficulties that the youngster may have, and you are going to provide the services and the additional instruction to help those youngsters overcome those difficulties, then, in fact, if there is some kind of a bias, it will be overcome before too long by proper instruction, proper learning experiences.

Mr. **Mottl.** I would like to thank all of you for spending your valuable time with us here this morning. We have learned a lot, and I think that it is going to be very helpful to us in our consideration of the bill as amended.

Thank you very much for coming this morning.

The subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the subcommittee adjourned, subject to call of the Chair.]

[Material for inclusion in the record follows:]

York County TAXPAYERS Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 372
York, Nebraska 68467

September 18, 1977

Re: HR Bill 6088

Chairman Carl Perkins
House Education and Labor Committee
2181 Rayburn Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Perkins:

Representative Ronald Mottl has asked me to submit views on the subject of minimum competency testing legislation.

In May of this year the Omaha World Herald carried a news account by the President of Creighton University to the effect that approximately 30% of new students entering Creighton had so little competency in mathematics and reading it was necessary to place them in special classes for review before they could be placed in regular university classes. As you can well understand, this duplication of the education process gets to be very costly.

In the same newspaper a week later there was an article by the Commandant of the San Diego Naval Training Station to the effect that about 30% of naval enrollees had so little basic education they could not be taught normal naval procedures, particularly the more technical aspects of naval life. The Commandant also stated that many of the enrollees who did pass were basically dangerous to themselves and to naval equipment, due particularly to an inability to follow printed instructions when placed out on a job. In the same paper was a companion article by the Commandant of the Marine Corps Training Base at Parris Island. Surprisingly, both placed the figure of 70% as the level of functional ability.

The buying public would not stand for or would not buy a product whose functional ability or whose ability to perform adequately was at 70% or which had to be modified before it could function according to its need. Why do we stand for it in education? Why do we allow our educators to produce a product 30% of which must receive further training or modification before their usefulness can be realized?

I am very strongly in favor of legislation mandating states to pass legislation requiring testing and requiring of minimum competency standards before graduation from high school, however the tests should be written as applying to a national competency level. Many educators would like to be allowed to write or design their own tests as applies to their own particular school. These tests would not, in my opinion, be worth the paper they are written on. I would hate to think that we have a teacher on the York staff with so little mental acumen that he or she could not write a test which would make the York students look "good" and make the administrative and teaching staff look even better, but it might bear no practical relationship to a national test which would reflect what high school graduates really should have learned.

There is no doubt the children of today must be educated. They must not be allowed to slide through school, receive a high school diploma only to be found out later that many are functionally illiterate. Bear,in mind that the level of 30% functionally illiterate as described by the President of Creighton University and the Commandants of Naval and Marine Corps schools does not include those students who have for one reason or another dropped out of school. These people are talking about high school graduates.

The educators are saying that curriculums must be expanded even though our children have experienced lower academic standards each year as evidenced by the 14-year skid in achievement test scores in high school graduates and the need for non-credit remedial instruction in our colleges and universities. Thank you for your consideration.

Very respectfully yours,

Raymond E Ratliff

Raymond E. Ratliff
President
York County TAXPAYERS Association, Inc.
Member, York, Nebraska Board of Education

nassp The National Association of Secondary School Principals
1904 Association Drive • Reston, Virginia 22091 • Tel: 703-860-0200

OWEN B. KIERNAN
Executive Director

September 12, 1977

The Honorable Ronald M. Mottl
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Mottl:

Thank you for giving citizens interested in upgrading the American educational process the opportunity to address the issue of competency testing.

Since your hearing schedule could not possibly accommodate all those interested in HR 6088, I ask that the enclosed testimony be entered into the record.

Thank you.

Yours very sincerely,

Executive Director

OBK:ag
Enclosures

cc The Honorable Carl Perkins

STATEMENT

of

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

to the

Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education

of the

Committee on Education and Labor
House of Representatives

September 12, 1977

The National Association of Secondary School Principals appreciates the opportunity to express its views on the merits of HR 6088, an amendment to Title VIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

For the past several years, the NASSP has supported the concept of accountability in regard to educational competency standards. In 1976, we published a monograph which dealt in comprehensive fashion with the subject and provided laymen and professionals alike with background information (see appended Competency Tests and Graduation Requirements). Additionally, we believe that educational evaluation mechanisms should consistently be refined and updated to insure that education of our youth becomes more effective.

HR 6088 seeks to establish federal standards of educational competency via a proposed national commission consisting of 15 presidentially appointed members.

The NASSP has strong reservations regarding this bill. We oppose as inappropriate mandatory federal standards to measure educational competency, whether as requirements or conditions to ESEA aid. Further, we question the constitutional legitimacy of the federal government's intervening in the states' responsibility of educating their citizens. Traditionally, education has been -- and we believe it should continue to be -- a local function, a state responsibility, and a federal concern. To force the federal government to assume a nation-wide administrative and/or supervisory role in this delicately balanced triumvirate does violence to the partnership. In addition to being constitutionally questionable it is fiscally indefensible when one considers that the federal contribution is a pitifully inadequate 7 to 8% of the total burden.

NASSP believes as well that federal standards are unnecessary, since many states already have taken legislative initiatives in the area of minimal proficiency standards to insure the quality of their elementary and secondary education systems. For example, nine states have enacted legislation establishing minimal competency testing. Sixteen other states have developed state board of education rulings aimed at accounting for educational proficiency. Eight more have legislation pending which calls for the establishment of basic standards of educational proficiency. Thus 33 states have taken positive steps toward competency-based education. We believe these states are responsibly and appropriately addressing the issue of educational accountability. We would encourage the remaining 17 states to pursue similar proficiency standards. We might add, if the federal government were to take a hand in educational accountability, that it should be in a supportive role, e.g. aiding financially in the development and evaluation of better standards, perhaps research assistance in the testing process. But we oppose the development of a national standard, or any suggestion of a federal curriculum.

Finally, in regard to HR 6088, we believe that (1) the creation of another advisory commission [on Basic Education per § 13(b)] runs counter to the Administration's proper intent to reduce the proliferation of such commissions; and (2) if one were created we would strongly oppose the exclusion of professional administrators when teachers and members of local and state boards are specifically included. [§ 813 6(2) (A) (B) (C) (D)].

In conclusion, the NASSP recognizes the important need for minimal standards of educational proficiency. We call on each state to proceed in the development of competency testing as a means of monitoring and evaluating its educational process. We ask the federal government to assume a supportive role in each state's quest for improved educational standards.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you our views on this crucial initiative in education.

Owen B. Kiernan
Executive Director